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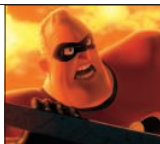
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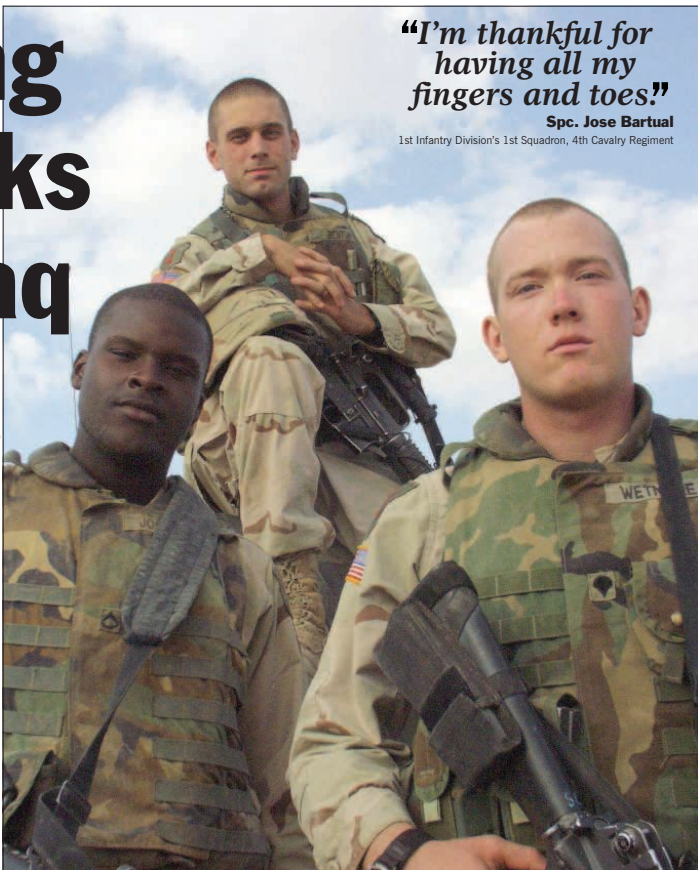
Giving thanks in Iraq

**Close calls
leave troops
counting
their
blessings**

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The sappers from Company B of the 9th Engineer Battalion have suffered more than their share of close calls, from mine explosions to mortar attacks to firefights. Their job is to find and identify roadside bombs before the bombs blow up, which exposes them to added risk. They are, from left: Pfc. Denaumbe Joshua, 20, of Washington, D.C.; Sgt. Jason Benton, 25, of Fortuna, Calif.; and Spc. Steve Wetmore, 20, of Union City, Pa.

STEVE LIEWER/Stars and Stripes



*"I'm thankful for
having all my
fingers and toes!"*

Spc. Jose Bartual

1st Infantry Division's 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment

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and Stripes.



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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Preppie killer arrested: "Preppie Killer" Robert Chambers, who was released from state prison last year, has been arrested on charges of driving with a suspended license and criminal drug possession.

Chambers was arrested during a traffic stop Tuesday at about 7:20 p.m. at Harlem River Drive and East 132nd Street in Harlem, New York. Police said that his car had no inspection sticker, and that they found a suspected illegal substance which was being tested on Wednesday.

Chambers confessed in 1988 to strangling 18-year-old Jennifer Levin two years earlier during a tryst in Central Park. He was released from the Auburn Correctional Facility on Valentine's Day 2003, after serving a 15-year sentence.

Evidence challenge: Defense attorneys for a Palestinian former professor accused of terrorism in Tampa, Fla., want a federal judge to throw out almost all the government's evidence, saying improper searches and inappropriate surveillance violated their client's constitutional rights.

Attorneys William Moffitt and Linda Moreno said in separate motions filed this week that federal agents made vague allegations to justify search warrants and may have erred in targeting Sami Al-Arian, a former professor at the University of South Florida, for surveillance.

Al-Arian and eight others who are charged with material support for terrorism, racketeering and money laundering. Al-Arian's trial is scheduled to begin in April.

Simpson memorabilia: A memorabilia collector was ordered to turn over O.J. Simpson's press credentials from the 1984 Olympics in another tiny step toward satisfying a \$33.5 million award in a lawsuit that found Simpson liable for the slayings of his ex-wife and her friend.

The order was issued in Santa Monica, Calif., after a closed-door court hearing to determine whether Simpson, a National Football League Hall of Famer who later turned to acting, is hiding assets from the family of Ron Goldman, who was slain with Nicole Brown Simpson in 1994.

Alfred Beardsley, a real estate agent and collector, was questioned by attorney Peter Casato, who represents Goldman's father, Fred. Superior Court Judge Gerald Rosenberg then ordered Beardsley to turn over the press credentials, which Simpson wore as an Olympics commentator for ABC-TV, by Dec. 14.

It was unclear how much the Olympic press credentials were worth, but Casato said outside court that Beardsley told them about "other tangible properties of substantive value" belonging to Simpson that Beardsley may be able to lead them to. Casato declined to elaborate.

Oscar screener: A former member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences accused of leaking "screener" copies of movies was fined \$300,000, the maximum allowed under federal law.

A federal judge ordered Carmine Caridi to pay Warner Bros. \$150,000 each for providing copies of "The Last Samurai" and "Mystic River" to a second man, who copied them and made them available for downloading on the Internet.

Caridi, 70, has told criminal investigators he sent VHS copies of about 60 movies he received each year to 51-year-old Russell Sprague, who converted the VHS tape into DVD format and then sent the originals back to Caridi, authorities said.

Movie studios routinely send copies of



FAO Schwarz bankruptcy: Young children are greeted Monday by characters from FAO Schwarz outside the store on New York City's Fifth Avenue. FAO Schwarz, the toy store known for its life-sized stuffed animals and kid-sized sports cars, hopes its refurbished Manhattan store reopening on Thanksgiving Day will cause children to squeal with joy and adults to open their wallets, as the company emerges from bankruptcy recommitment to high-end toys.

films to Academy members, who view them in their homes as they prepare to vote in various categories for the annual Academy Awards.

In April, Sprague pleaded guilty to one count of copyright infringement for pirating Oscar screener copies of about 200 films including "Kill Bill: Vol. 1" and "Seabiscuit." He is awaiting sentencing.

Jet ski death: A California man whose wife died after the couple was stranded from what he said was a watercraft accident has been charged with killing her, more than a month after authorities first arrested him for the crime and then set him free.

Corbin Easterling, 35, was charged Tuesday with homicide, spousal battery and inflicting great bodily injury on Jennifer Easterling, 35.

Easterling was first arrested Oct. 14 but was freed four days later after prosecutors said they needed more information and time to investigate his wife's Oct. 12 death. Further interviews and autopsy results led them to say they had sufficient evidence to convict him.

Health registry analysis: The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene said most people enrolled in the World Trade Center Health Registry reported one or more respiratory problems that started or became worse after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

The quarterly report, released Monday, also said eight percent of the 70,000 enrolled adults experienced psychological distress in the 30-day period before being interviewed for the registry.

The report said 47 percent of interviewees complained of new or worsened sinus or nasal irritation; 42 complained of shortness of breath; and 38 percent complained of throat irritation and wheezing.

Other symptoms that participants complained of included persistent coughs, eye irritations, severe headaches and hearing loss.

World

Independent aid group in Fallujah: The first independent aid group to enter the

Iraqi city of Fallujah after two weeks of fighting saw some civilians, but had to turn back before delivering any assistance because of security concerns, the international Red Cross said Tuesday.

U.S. officials have said they have mostly cleared out insurgents in the city west of Baghdad, but have conceded a risk of attacks remains as U.S.-led forces hunt down remnants.

Ahmed Rawi, a spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, said he was still awaiting a full report of the Iraqi Red Crescent on what it encountered, but was able to confirm that the convoy had entered Fallujah on Monday. He said the convoy, which consisted of ambulances and three trucks loaded with blankets, drinking water and first-aid kits, saw a few civilians before having to turn back.

Consular office reopens: The U.S. Embassy on Wednesday reopened its consular office in Bombay, India, after shutting it for a day following a threat of a possible terrorist attack.

The Bombay offices reopened after a thorough security review, an embassy statement said.

Security around the American consulate was tightened Tuesday after the U.S. government warned that terrorists may be planning attacks on U.S. interests in India.

Quake housing: Hundreds of people living in public shelters following last month's earthquake in northern Japan began moving to temporary government-built houses on Wednesday.

The magnitude-6.8 earthquake on Oct. 23 and several large aftershocks in Niigata prefecture killed 40 people and damaged over 16,000 homes. About 6,300 people are still living in school gymnasiums and other public shelters.

In Nagaoka, the largest city in the quake zone, residents in shelters began moving into 190 prefabricated housing units built at a former train depot, said Niigata prefectural spokesman Gen Ishizuka. Another 25 units were built in a nearby town. Authorities plan to construct 3,500 housing units by mid-December for residents who lost their homes or had to evacuate because of the danger of landslides, Ishizuka said.

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

Purported al-Zarqawi tape scolds clerics

BY SAMEER N. YACOB

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — An audiotape purportedly made by Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi lashed out Wednesday at Muslim scholars for not speaking out against U.S. actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, saying they have "let us down in the darkest circumstances."

It was unclear whether the tape posted Wednesday on the Internet was intended as a direct threat against Iraq's Sunni religious establishment, who have come under attack recently with the laying this week of two Sunni clerics by gunmen.

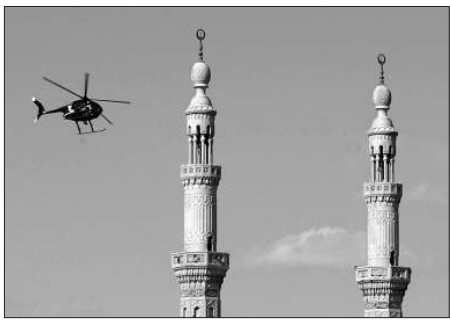
"You have let us down in the darkest circumstances and handed us over to the enemy... You have quit supporting the mujahideen," said the voice on the tape, purported to be al-Zarqawi's. "Hundreds of thousands of the nation's sons are being slaughtered at the hands of the infidels because of your silence."

On the tape, which could not be authenticated, al-Zarqawi addressed his comments to the "ulama" — senior Islamic clerics and scholars. The tape was not posted by al-Zarqawi's designated media coordinator, Abu Mayssara al-Iraqi, and it was unclear whether the material on it was new.

Al-Zarqawi, who leads the terror group known as al-Qaida in Iraq, is believed to have escaped from his headquarters in the insurgent-held stronghold of Fallujah during the massive U.S.-led assault earlier this month.

"You made peace with the tyranny and handed over the countries and the people to the Jews and Crusaders... when you resort to silence on their crimes... and when you greeted youth from heaven to the battlefields in order to defend the religion," he said.

"Instead of implementing God's orders, you chose your safety and preferred your money and sons. You left the mujahideen facing the strongest power in the world," he said. "Are not your hearts shaken by the scenes of your brothers being surrounded and hurt by your enemies being assassinated by gunmen. Both clerics — one slain in the northern city of Mosul, the other in the town of Muqadadiyah just north of Baghdad — were members of an influential Sunni group that openly called for a boycott of Jan. 30 national elections because of the U.S. offensive against Fallujah."



A private security helicopter flies over Imam Taimiyah Mosque in Baghdad on Wednesday, after a car bomb exploded nearby. An audiotape purportedly made by Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi lashed out at Muslim scholars for not speaking out against U.S. actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, saying they have "let us down in the darkest circumstances."

It was unclear whether the two attacks were related, and there has been no claim of responsibility.

The audio message appeared as U.S. and Iraqi security forces continued their search for al-Zarqawi after reports that he was in the region north of Baghdad. The U.S. has placed a \$25 million bounty on his head.

His group is believed responsible for dozens of deadly bombings and gruesome beheadings of foreign hostages.

U.S. and Iraqi forces have been dealing with a wave of violence across Iraq, sparked by the assault on Fallujah and continuing even after the military says the former insurgent stronghold largely has been taken.

Five more bodies were found Wednesday in Mosul, the U.S. military said, bringing the total to 20 found in the city the past week.

LT. Col. Paul Hastings, with Task Force Olympia, said it was not yet confirmed whether the five men whose bodies were found belonged to Iraqi security forces.

Before the latest grisly discovery, U.S. troops had found 10 bodies of Iraqi soldiers — nine of them shot execution-style. Five other bodies, including four decapitated ones, still have not been identified.

On Wednesday, Nineveh province's deputy governor said his convoy came under gunfire in Mosul, killing one of his bodyguards and injuring two others. An Interior Ministry special forces member in the area was also killed, he said.

Deputy Gov. Khasro Gouran said he was on his way home when his convoy was attacked. He said authorities were investigating the possibility that the convoy was mistakenly fired upon by the special Interior Ministry force in the area.

In Mahmudiya, gunmen ambushed a taxi carrying an Iraqi National Guard soldier to his military base after dawn Wednesday, said Dr. Dawoud al-Taie of Mahmudiya Hospital. There was no information on his condition.

Mahmudiya, about 25 miles south of Baghdad, is in an area known as the "triangle of death," a region where rebels frequently attack U.S. and allied forces.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Tuesday, at least 1,229 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 957 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is one higher than the Defense Department's tally, which was last updated Tuesday at 10 a.m. EDT.

The British military has reported 74 deaths: Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,091 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 848 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

Since the start of U.S. military operations in Iraq, 9,326 U.S. servicemembers have been wounded in hostile action, according to the Defense Department's weekly tally.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No new deaths reported.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Marine Spc. Blain M. Ebert, 22, Washueta, Wash.; killed Monday in hostile fire in Baghdad; assigned to the 4th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

■ Marine Capt. Michael R. Cohen, 23, Jacobus, Pa.; killed Monday in hostile action in Anbar province, Iraq; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

Rumsfeld: Iraqi troops' performance improving

BY ROBERT BURNS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S.-trained Iraqi troops, faulted for ineffective fighting in previous clashes with insurgents, made a "generally pretty good" showing in the Fallujah offensive, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Tuesday.

Increasing the number and improving the ability of Iraqi security forces — soldiers, police and border guards — are essential to an American strategy for withdrawing from Iraq.

Rumsfeld said he was briefed earlier in the day by Gen. George Casey, the top American commander in Iraq, and Casey's boss, Gen. John Abizaid, head of U.S. Central Command, on the Iraqis' performance.

"The report on the units of Iraqi forces that have been involved in Fallujah and elsewhere during this period has been generally pretty good and that they've performed well," Rumsfeld said.

There were "some instances where it was not perfect," he said, but Iraqi troops are gaining confidence in the face of an insurgency Rumsfeld called "the murderous enemies of progress."

Eight Iraqi troops were killed in Fallujah fighting, compared with at least 54 Americans, and about 10 times more Americans were wounded than Iraqi troops. That reflects the more direct role U.S. troops played in confronting the insurgents. The Iraqi forces served mostly in a support role.

At a Pentagon news confer-



Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld

ence, Rumsfeld said it was too early to know how soon the Iraqi forces will be ready to take full responsibility for security, allowing the 138,000 U.S. troops to go home.

2 GIs killed, 1 wounded by Afghanistan bomb

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Two U.S. soldiers died and another was injured when a bomb ripped through their patrol in southern Afghanistan Wednesday, a fresh reminder of the country's insecurity after a freshly resolved hostage drama.

The troops were attacked near Del Rawood, a town 250 miles southwest of Kabul, in Uruzgan province, where the military has clashed repeatedly with Taliban militants.

"We're sorry to say that two U.S. soldiers were killed and one U.S. soldier was injured," Maj. Mark McCann said. The wounded soldier was in stable condition at a nearby U.S. base.

The military withheld the victims' names until their families could be informed, and gave no further details.

A total of 110 soldiers have died since the United States attacked Afghanistan's former ruling Taliban and their al-Qaida allies in late 2001, according to U.S. government figures.

The toll exacted by Taliban and al-Qaida holdouts defying a U.S. force currently numbering about 18,000 pales next to the more than 1,200 Americans killed in Iraq.

But there is concern Afghan militants are learning from their Iraqi counterparts, from the already widespread use of roadside bombs to the Oct. 28 kidnapping of three foreign election workers which sent shudders through Kabul's expatriate community.



STEVE LIEWER/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. Orville Whitlock, 30, of Lynchburg, Va., explains how a rocket-propelled grenade hit his Company B, 9th Engineer Battalion Humvee during a patrol May 5. Whitlock and four other soldiers received shrapnel wounds — which he said "feels like someone sliced open your back and poured in hot chicken grease" — but all survived.

On edge but thankful

Troops in Iraq wary of close calls yet grateful to be alive

BY STEVE LIEWER

Stars and Stripes

FORWARD OPERATING BASE

Six hundred thirty-three times since the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment arrived in Iraq last March, they have been attacked by the enemy.

Sometimes a roadside bomb blows up next to a truck. A mortar explodes in the middle of the base. Insurgents pop out from hidden positions and open fire with AK-47 rifles on a whole convoy. In Iraq, the front lines are nowhere, and they are everywhere.

At a base like FOB MacKenzie, home of the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, it is hard to find an infantryman, engineer, supply sergeant, pilot or clerk who hasn't had a close brush with death. Most have had several.

"They've lived through things they'll never share with anyone except other combat veterans and fought fear beyond anything most civilians will ever feel. The experience has changed some of them in ways they don't yet realize."

"These guys are battle-hardened. There isn't anybody who hasn't been under attack," said Maj. Kirk Dorr, 38, of Marlboro, Mass., the squadron's operations officer. "The logisticians and convoy supporters see just as much contact as our line troops."

Seven 1-4 Cavalry troops and one civilian from MacKenzie have

died in the nine months since the unit took over the former Iraqi airfield 20 miles east of Samarra. More than 50 others have been wounded.

Hundreds of 1-4 Cavalry soldiers have dodged death by a whisker, aided by luck, pluck or divine providence. Almost everyone here can name three or four or more occasions he should have died, but didn't.

"I can't even count them," said Spc. Joshua Burgess, 25, of Arlington, Texas, a member of Troop B. He has lived through two bomb attacks on his convoy the same day and countless pot shots he describes as "nothing really significant."

enemy.

"The first 10 or 15 seconds, everything is chaos," said Capt. John Trylich, 30, the Troop B commander. "The explosion, the dust and dirt... The radios start screaming, everyone is yelling."

But then the training really does kick in. Soldiers remember what they're supposed to do: take a firing position, man a radio, organize troops or treat casualties. Leaders say panic is surprisingly rare.

"Even though you want to duck down, you can't," said Spc. Robert Laurel, 21, of Troy, Mo., a gunner for the 9th Engineers. "Your battle buddies are relying on you to stay up there and keep firing."

Heading out on the next patrol isn't always easy. But it is part of the job. Every soldier must find a way to get past the fear.

"Everybody deals with it differently," said Sgt. Jason Benton, 25, of the 9th Engineers. "I just try not to think about it, act like it's the first time I'm going out again."

Pfc. Joshua Schmidt, 21, said he didn't want to leave the base in an armorless Humvee after

surviving a mine strike in an armored one last April. Bartual said he struggled to get back in his vehicle and go on patrols again after the near-miss at the cemetery.

"I was a nervous wreck after finishing that mission," Bartual said. "I used to get blisters from gripping the steering wheel so tight."

SEE CLOSE ON PAGE 5

Troops recount how they narrowly escaped death

Wrong place becomes right

Not long ago, Capt. John Trylich, 30, the lanky, redheaded commander of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment's Troop B "Bulldawgs," issued a stern butt-chewing to one of his Bradley fighting vehicle crews for parking on the main road of Forward Operating Base MacKenzie, Iraq,

instead of 40 yards away in a marshaling yard, the proper spot to line up for the afternoon convoy.

Trylich thought about moving the Bradley and several Humvees to the yard but decided not to waste the time. Within five minutes, the commander and his troops heard the crack and the smoke of an incoming rocket, followed by a deafening boom that sent everyone running for the safety of their armored vehicles.

"It was very very quick, very loud and very close," Trylich said.

"We were scattered like roaches, running for cover."

When the dust settled, Trylich and his men saw that the 107 mm rocket had landed just 40 meters away — precisely where the convoy should have lined up. "It was literally a stone's throw from where we were standing," he said, shaking his head. "An angel was on our side that day."

Capt. John Trylich

A landing and then a getaway

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Rob Carpenter, 37, of the squadron's Troop E, had been flying his OH-58 Kiowa Warrior in the early-April uprising called the "battle of Baquba" northeast of Baghdad.

Flying in support of the 1st Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade, Carpenter and his co-pilot saw insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades toward them. Suddenly one hit their main rotor, knocking off four feet of one blade.

"We could feel the concussion," Carpenter said. "It was very violent. I wasn't thinking about anything else because I had about seven seconds before I hit the ground."

In a crowded city neighborhood, they happened to come down — hard but safely — in the only open field around: a neighborhood cesspool. They could hear angry mobs and small-arms fire in the distance.

"We knew we needed to get away," Carpenter said. "I didn't want to leave the helicopter, but I didn't want to get strung up on a bridge, either."

Carpenter and the co-pilot ran through the muck and commandeered a civilian car, but they didn't know where to go. Then the "cavalry" rode to the rescue. Along came a convoy of troops from the 1st Squadron, 6th Field Artillery.

"I saw Humvees screaming around the corner," Carpenter recalled. "I said 'God bless America!'"

No April fool

Capt. Steven Janko, a military lawyer assigned to the 1-4 Cav, keeps a reminder of his closest call sitting on his desk.

On April 1, as he walked back to his office from the command bunker at MacKenzie about 7 p.m., a shower of rockets rained down on the base.

"We just started running into the bunker. Four or five rockets had come down already," said Janko, 32, of Honolulu.

He felt a spray of gravel hit his helmet. He looked behind him and saw a 107 mm rocket nose down in the parking lot, about 10 feet from where he stood. An 18-foot plume of orange flames and smoke sped from its tail — but the rocket didn't explode.

Janko ran into the office he shares with the squadron's chaplain, Capt. Gary Fisher, and his assistant, Staff Sgt. Ed Baptist.

"I said 'Guess what, there's a rocket outside!'" Janko said, "but nobody would believe me because it was April Fools' Day."

Spc. Jose Bartual

Spc. Robert Laurel

For thousands of soldiers in the war zone, life itself is something to be grateful for this Thanksgiving.

"I'm thankful for having all my fingers and toes," said Spc. Jose Bartual, 26, of New York City.

By now these men hardly mind small-arms fire, which at least gives them a chance to fight back. What they hate most are the roadside-bomb explosions. They come out of nowhere, from an invisible

Capt. Steve Janko



Sgt. Anthony Troche, left, and Pfc. Jihoon Ham

No safety in ambulance

It's a good day when you hit a bomb and your only casualty is a bottle of iced tea.

Pfc. Jihoon Ham and Sgt. Anthony Troche, medics with the 557th Medical Company, learned as much in September, when a roadside bomb hit their ambulance as they conveyed from Mosul to Tikrit.

The vehicle in front of them spotted the bomb, but Ham and Troche's ambulance had rolled just past it when the unseen insurgent detonated it.

"I was kind of surprised," said Ham, 24, of Flushing, N.Y., who was driving. "It was a pretty loud boom."

The explosion flattened both tires and spun the ambulance three-quarters of the way around. A cascade of shrapnel pierced the patient compartment in the rear, but no one was there.

One jagged piece of metal penetrated the cab four inches from Troche's head. Another shattered a container of iced tea between them in the front seat.

"The whole vehicle was smelling like peach iced tea," said Troche, 28, of Hometown, Puerto Rico.

The stunned medics looked at each and realized neither had been hurt.

"I said, 'Whoa, that was close!'" Troche recalled. "After that, we could say we survived that one. We're good to go."

Dangerous roads

Sometimes close calls come in bunches.

That's a lesson Spc. Joshua Burgess, 25, of Arlington, Texas, learned Aug. 1 on Main Supply Route Grape, a highway east of Samarra that was frequently attacked during the summer when insurgents controlled the city.

The patrol of three Humvees from Company B of the 1-4 Cav left that morning to check the route for roadside bombs: one of the most dangerous jobs on one of the most dangerous roads in Iraq.

Then his patrol found one.

A powerful "daisy chain" bomb made of three 155 mm artillery rounds tied together exploded underneath one of the other Humvees about 11 a.m. One soldier died instantly, and another lay mortally wounded, his legs blown off by the force of the blast.

"Your world just goes to [expletive] when that happens," Burgess said.

Burgess, in the next Humvee, blacked out briefly and suffered a concussion.

But the patrol regrouped. A call went out for a medical evacuation helicopter for two injured soldiers, and to the "Bulldawg" troop headquarters for help.

Capt. John Trylich led a relief convoy that included three M1 Abrams tanks. They recovered the bombed-out vehicle, packed up, and rolled back toward their camp, FOB MacKenzie.

Trylich decided to try a trick: an expensive first class from an engineer platoon had suggested to him that morning. He ordered the almost indestructible tanks to drive along the edges of the road, where insurgents typically bury the bombs. The sergeant said a tank would bury a bomb enough to limit the death and destruction even if it did blow.

The trick worked. An even more powerful bomb, this one with four 155 mm shells, exploded under a Humvee 10 minutes after they rolled out. The driver and a passenger suffered only minor injuries.

"The tanks saved those guys," Trylich said later. "Even though it was a tragic situation, it was a lucky day."

— Steve Liewer

Close: Safety within inches

CLOSE, FROM PAGE 4

Occasionally someone finds excuses to dodge a mission. But soldiers know their buddies depend on them. It doesn't happen often.

"If you don't go, someone else has to," said Spc. Steve Wetmore, 20, of Union City, Pa., and the 9th Engineers.

Sgt. Orville Whitlock, a squad leader with the 9th Engineers' sappers,

survived an RPG strike on his Humvee May 5. The detonating charge whizzed just inches

from the heads of the two men in the right-side seats, exploding against the front windshield in a shower of safety glass. All five occupants suffered shrapnel wounds.

Still he rides on patrols — sometimes in the same Humvee, which still is scarred with a large hole where the grenade hit.

"Everybody's scared. But you can't be too scared to function," Whitlock said. "I use the fear and the worrying about coming back as fuel to get through the mission."

"You have to keep your head in the game," Benton said. "You can't fear death."

Rarely do soldiers discuss these close calls with anyone back home. They don't want to worry wives, kids, husbands or parents.

"I don't tell 'em anything — just everything's good, the weather's getting better," said Benton, who has a wife, Scharla-mange, and two children back home in Schweinfurt, Germany.

"They already worry enough about me."

"You've got to candy-coat it," said Spc. Shane Stupavsky, 20, of Quincy, Ill., who serves in Trylich's troop.

Even among themselves, soldiers say, they don't often talk much about combat once it's over. But there is an unspoken bond among troops who have been together in an especially hairy mission.

"Sometimes just a glance, a pause in a discussion, is worth a thousand words," Trylich said.

With the 1st Infantry Division's deployment now almost three-quarters complete, troops are thinking more and more about getting home safely and need to stay focused on the mission at hand, soldiers said.

Nearly 100 of the 22,000 soldiers from the 1st ID-led Task Force Danger — which also includes brigades from the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division and the North Carolina National Guard, plus many smaller Guard and Reserve detachments — have been killed.

Ironically, there is a grim joy to war. Soldiers report a fierce adrenaline rush from combat, and they get to use the skills they've trained at for years. There's a certain pride in surviving a tough scrape.

"Any soldier that's gone into combat has to be satisfied with what he's done," said Capt. Gary Fisher, the 39-year-old 1-4 Cavalry chaplain from Alexandria, La. "It's life-defining. It's very fulfilling to have achieved mission complete."

He has twice been on convoys in which soldiers died from enemy attacks. He vividly remembers the pavement burning his knees, the sweat pouring from his head, as he prayed in the ear of an injured sergeant.

"I am most alive when I experience moments of combat," said Fisher. "It has a way of cutting away everything that's unnecessary for life."

Some soldiers say they've already sensed the jarring difference between life at home and life in a combat zone.

"When I went home on [rest and recuperation], people were just griping and bitching about little things," Schmidt said. "They're not thinking about getting killed every day."

Dorr believes troops who have lived close to death have been changed in ways that they won't fully appreciate until long after they get home.

"There are certainly some people here who have seen some awful things," he said. "You're either going to leave Iraq a better person or a worse person. But you're going to change."

"I think they understand," Fisher said, "that this is the defining moment in their lives."



"I don't tell [the family] anything — just 'everything's good, the weather's getting better.' They already worry enough about me."

Sgt. Jason Benton



Spc. Shaun Stupavsky



Spc. Steve Wetmore



"When I went home on [rest and recuperation], people were just griping and bitching about little things. They're not thinking about getting killed every day."

Pfc. Joshua Burgess

First Stryker Brigade sent to Iraq honored

BY MELANTHIA MITCHELL

The Associated Press

FORT LEWIS, Wash. — Clad in desert camouflage and standing at attention, members of the first Stryker Brigade sent to Iraq were honored Monday at a homecoming ceremony after a yearlong deployment.

Hundreds of friends and family sat in the bleachers at Watkins Field snapping photos and talking excitedly. Though brigade members have slowly been trickling

home since October, Monday's ceremony was the first to honor the entire unit.

The hour-long ceremony included comments from Col. Michael Rounds, commander of the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division. He read the names of the 20 Stryker Brigade soldiers killed in Iraq.

"They have earned a special place in the history of the brigade. We will never forget them," he said.

The infantry brigade is anchored by the Stryker, the Army's

newest medium-weight combat vehicle. The eight-wheeled Stryker is widely viewed as a visible symbol of efforts to transform the Army into a faster, more agile fighting force.

The brigade was stationed in Mosul, Balad, Samarra and Duliyah.

It conducted raids, reconnaissance and established security operations incorporating Army security forces.

The post's commander, Lt. Gen. James Dubik, presented

awards of valor to three soldiers, including Spc. Joshua Miller, who received a Silver Star for helping free a commander who became caught in debris when the squad was attacked in Mosul. Miller also is credited with single-handedly repelling a 20-man assault and killing four insurgents.

At a round-table discussion following the homecoming, Rounds and other senior leaders and soldiers echoed sentiments of national commanders that the Strykers were a key to keeping the brigade's casualties to a minimum.

"It would be significantly higher if not for the equipment," said Lt. Col. Jay Flowers, commander of 3rd Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment.

Before coming home, members of the 3rd Brigade helped train their replacements, the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, a second Stryker unit from Fort Lewis, just south of Tacoma.

The 1st Brigade began deploying in October for a one-year mission. It includes more than 4,000 soldiers and 300 Strykers.

Red Cross says it paid another visit to Saddam

The Associated Press

GENEVA — The international Red Cross has visited Saddam Hussein again to check on his condition in detention, a spokesman said Wednesday.

Muin Kassis, spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Amman, Jordan, said he was not immediately able to give details of the visit, the latest in a series that the ICRC has been making to the former Iraqi president since he was captured by U.S. forces last December.

The ICRC team, which usually includes a doctor, has been visiting Saddam every six to eight weeks in a prison in Iraq, where it also visits other "high-value detainees."

The visit confirmed what the organization was in early October. The ICRC refuses to disclose details of his health or circum-

stances, but it has carried letters from him to his family.

Saddam underwent surgery to repair a hernia at the end of September and made a full recovery, a U.S. official said last month.

The U.S. military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Saddam's health was good "with no major ailments or concerns."

In July, the Guardian newspaper in Britain and Newsday in New York quoted Iraq's human rights minister, Bakhtiar Amin, as saying Saddam was being treated for high blood pressure and a chronic prostate infection and was suffering from a hernia.

Saddam is believed to be held in an American-guarded facility near Baghdad International Airport.

An adviser to the Iraqi interim prime minister told a Kuwaiti daily Tuesday that Hussein is living like a king in U.S. military custody.



KENT HARRIS/Stars and Stripes

Five of the 15 commanders of Task Force Eagle meet Wednesday before a ceremony marking the disestablishment of the mission at Eagle Base in Bosnia-Herzegovina. From left are: Maj. Gen. Robert Halvorsen, Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Maj. Gen. James Mason, Brig. Gen. Richard Nash and Brig. Gen. Timothy Wright. Some U.S. troops will stay in country to support NATO operations, but all but 250 American troops will be out of the country within a few weeks.

Mission's over for U.S. troops in Bosnia

BY KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

EAGLE BASE, Bosnia-Herzegovina — It was part reunion, part celebration. A look back at the past. A hopeful glance into the future.

A ceremony nine years in the making took place Wednesday at the sprawling base camp in the Balkans that thousands of Americans have called home during the last decade.

Task Force Eagle — the primary U.S. mission in Bosnia — is no more.

"This ceremony officially means mission complete," Gen. B.B. Bell, commander of U.S. Army Europe, told a gymnasium full of American and allied personnel — or at least as full as it gets in Bosnia-Herzegovina these days. "And mission accomplished."

Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Severe furlled the mission colors as Brig. Gen. Timothy Wright held the flag. And, just like that, the mission was, at least symbolically, completed.

U.S. soldiers will still be on the ground for a short time. But all but about 250 will be home in plenty of time to spend Christmas with their families. The remainder will continue serving under NATO auspices, even as the European Union assumes responsibility for the mission in country.

Stabilization Force, which would mark its eight-year birthday in December, won't make it that far. Its last day of existence is Dec. 2, that's when the EU officially takes over in a ceremony in Sarajevo.

Just about all the American contingent could be gone by then. Much of the current rotation — SFOR 15 — is already back in the States. A few hundred left Oct. 31. Many flew out Nov. 15.

This rotation has been longer than most. Headed by the 38th Infantry Division of the Indiana National

Guard, about 950 soldiers had been on the ground since March before the recent departures.

That number is just a fraction of the 20,000 Americans who initially comprised the mission in December 1995. Bell, a brigadier general and assistant commander for the 1st Infantry Division at the time, was on hand as soldiers of the 1st Armored Division bridged the storm-strengthened Sava River to allow hundreds of vehicles to cross into the country.

"It was a sporting event for any army," he said, marveling on the conditions that were overcome by the 1st AD, other Army units and the Air Force in getting troops and supplies into the country. He said it took about 400 trains, 1,400 aircraft sorties, 440 buses and 250 convoys to get the initial equipment and materiel into Bosnia.

Since then, countless tons have been shipped into the country as rotation after rotation of active-duty, then Reserve forces, served in Bosnia. Wright, the outgoing task force commander, estimated that 100,000 Americans have served here. More than a few of those served more than once.

The task force was first led by the Germany-based 1st AD. The 1st ID followed for a year, then gave way to the 1st AD again. After stints by the 1st Cavalry Division and 10th Mountain Division, the mission largely was taken over by the Army Reserve and National Guard. Most of their rotations were for six months.

Five former task force commanders were on hand for the ceremony, along with former Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley, who was the top enlisted soldier in Bosnia during the initial mission.

"I think there's nostalgia," Bell said of the mission ending. "There's no sad feelings."

Bell said he believes the Army has made a difference in Bosnia and those who have served in the country should be proud.

"Soldiers of Task Force Eagle, past and present, this is your legacy."

E-mail Kent Harris at: harris@small.ustripes.osd.mil

Iraqi baby to return home

DAYTON, Ohio — A 14-month-old Iraqi girl who received free treatment in the United States for a possibly fatal growth in her brain began the trip home, about six months after her parents brought her to a U.S. military base in her homeland.

Fatemah Hassan and her mother took off Tuesday from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base on a cargo plane. Maj. Ted Thompson, spokesman for the 445th Airlift Wing, said the child would be flown to Ramstein Air Base in Germany before returning to Iraq.

Fatemah was diagnosed with a large hemangioma, a dense group of blood vessels that grows abnormally large.

Mom trucking Thanksgiving dinner to son

HARTLAND, Mich. — Yvette Boulton wants her son to get a home-cooked Thanksgiving meal before he's deployed to Iraq — so she's trucking the feast 761 miles to Fort Bragg, N.C.

Boulton will be on the road 13 hours so she can feed her son, Army Cpl. Jordan Keimman, 22, and 14 of his friends. The soldiers must remain within an hour of base so they could be called to Iraq. Keimman fought in Iraq from September to February.

The Fort Bragg holiday dinner was conceived a few weeks ago when Boulton called her son to tell him she would be bringing him dinner. She suggested he "invite a few friends."

Scholar sentenced for smuggling Iraqi artifacts

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — A Providence resident and Middle East scholar has been sentenced to six months of home confinement for trying to smuggle 4,000-year-old Iraqi artifacts into the United States.

Joseph Braude pleaded guilty in August to attempting to sneak carved stone marking seals belonging to the Iraqi National Museum into the U.S. after purchasing them at the black market in Iraq last year. The 30-year-old Braude was sentenced Monday in U.S. District Court in Brooklyn. He also received two years' probation and must pay \$2,000.

From The Associated Press

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IN THE STATES

Bush orders massive additions to CIA

BY GREG MILLER
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — President Bush has ordered what may be a major expansion of the CIA, calling for the beleaguered agency to add thousands of new analysts and spies as part of an ongoing build-up in the war on terrorism, according to a White House memorandum released Tuesday.

But the directive set no timetable for the changes and offered no indication that the White House intends to ask Congress for the massive funding increase such a plan likely would require.

The plan was outlined in a memorandum delivered to CIA Director Porter J. Goss last week. In it, Bush instructed the intelligence chief to increase the number of analysts and spies at the CIA by 50 percent. The figure summed current and former intelligence officials, several of whom said the CIA has not charted such an aggressive course of growth since its inception in the aftermath of World War II.

Agency told in memorandum to increase number of analysts, spies by 50 percent

The CIA is thought to have an annual budget of about \$5 billion, and to employ more than 17,000 people, although actual figures are classified. Sources said the agency's clandestine service employs several thousand people, and that its analytic branch — known as the directorate of intelligence — is even larger.

The Bush memorandum says the increases are to take place "as soon as feasible," and would be "subject to the availability of appropriations." Bush gave the agency 90 days to develop a "detailed budget and implementation plan."

Because of the caveats contained in the document and the low-key, mysterious manner in which it was released by the White House, the memorandum was greet-

ed with a mixture of enthusiasm and skepticism in the intelligence community.

"I wouldn't overreach" in attaching significance to the document, said a U.S. intelligence official. "The way it's being looked at is a codification of some of the things the agency has been doing before. It builds on some of those measures and adds to them."

The official acknowledged that the 50 percent targets are significantly higher than anything previously articulated by the administration, but said the issue of timing was not addressed.

"The question becomes 'When?' and there doesn't seem to be any time frame," the official said.

The White House provided no additional details on the memorandum, one of several

issued by Bush last week and released Tuesday as part of a series of measures aimed on recommendations from the commission that investigated the Sept. 11 attacks.

A White House official said the directives represent an effort by Bush to "take additional steps under his own authority responding to recommendations made by the 9/11 commission. These are partial steps."

A senior administration official cautioned against interpreting the memo as a shift in policy or a preview of new budget requests. It is more of a "refocusing," the official said. "This is the president's attempt to be responsive to the 9/11 commission recommendations, to put further specificity to what he agreed to in August," the official said.

While the expansion could require new money, the senior administration official said some of the growth could be covered with existing money. It's fair for us to say that since 9/11, and during the president's first administration, these budgets have grown significantly," the official said.

Stories differ in Wis. hunter shooting case

Victim, suspect each say other party fired first shot

BY ROBERT IMRIE
The Associated Press

HAYWARD, Wis. — The man suspected of shooting six hunters to death and a survivor agree that the tragedy began with a confrontation on private land. But they sharply differ on what happened next.

Survivor Lauren Hesebeck told investigators Chai Vang, 36, of St. Paul, Minn., turned around after a verbal exchange and started shooting his rifle from 40 yards away.

But Vang told Sawyer County investigators he began firing only after one of Hesebeck's hunting buddies, Terry Willers, shot at him with a rifle from about 100 feet away and missed.

Vang, a Hmong immigrant from Laos, also claimed the hunters taunted him with racial slurs and warned him he would be reported to law enforcement for being on private land, according to a document filed Tuesday.

Hesebeck's version, contained in the same statement, makes no mention of that type of language or verbal hostility, other than saying Vang used profanity at one point.

Hesebeck, who was released from a hospital Tuesday after treatment for a shoulder wound, told investigators Willers shot at Vang after Vang fired first but missed.

Both accounts agreed that Vang shot the others as more people from the deer camp arrived at the scene, summoned by Hesebeck using a walkie-talkie to call for help.

Vang said he continued firing as the group scattered, and at one point chased one of the hunters and shot him in the back, only to find the man had no gun, the document states.

Authorities have said there was only one gun among the victims.

According to investigators, it's believed Vang fired at least 20 shots.



THE STAR TRIBUNE/AP

Lauren Hesebeck stands on a porch at his home in Rice Lake, Wis., after being released from the hospital Tuesday. Hesebeck was one of two hunters wounded and six killed following a confrontation with another hunter trespassing on private land.

No one answered the door at the Hesebeck home in rural Rice Lake on Tuesday. Members of the family and another victim's family planned to talk with reporters Wednesday.

Sunday's shootings occurred after Vang got lost while hunting, climbed into a tree stand on private property and then got into the confrontation with Willers and others hunting with him.

The victims were part of a group of about 15 people who made their annual opening-weekend trip to the 400-acre property co-owned by Robert Croteau and Willers.

Killed were Croteau, 42; his son, Joey Croteau, 20; Al Laski, 43; Mark Roidt, 28; Jessica Willers, 27; and Denny Drew, 55, all from the Rice Lake area. Terry Willers, Jessica's father, remained hospitalized Wednesday in good condition.

Vang was arrested about four hours after the shootings as he emerged from the woods with his empty semiautomatic rifle. Five people died in the woods; a sixth died Monday in a hospital. Two others were wounded.

Circuit Judge Norman Yackel ordered Vang jailed Tuesday on \$2.5 million bail. He ruled that evidence submitted to him was sufficient to hold Vang on suspicion of murder and attempted murder, pending the filing of formal charges.

Viacom reaches deal with FCC to end probe

BY EMILY FREDRICK
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Viacom will pay a record \$3.5 million to settle dozens of federal investigations into alleged indecency on TV and the radio, and introduce delays in more live programming to help catch troublesome material before it gets on the air.

The settlement, announced Tuesday, closes investigations dating back to 2001. One involved shock jock Howard Stern, and two focused on Opie and Anthony, who lost their Viacom-owned New York radio show after it featured a couple purporting to have sex inside St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Greg "Opie" Hughes and Anthony Cumia went silent after the 2002 show until October, when they joined with XM Satellite Radio, where Federal Communications Commission regulations don't apply.

Stern is joining the Sirius satellite network in January 2006, when his contract with Viacom-owned Infinity Broadcasting expires.

Viacom, which also owns CBS

and MTV, agreed to implement a companywide compliance plan aimed at preventing future violations of federal indecency statutes. The plan includes installation of audio delay equipment at radio stations that broadcast live programming and training employees about indecency laws.

"This consent decree allows us to move forward and to focus our efforts in this area by serving our viewers and listeners with techniques to safeguard live broadcasts," Viacom said in a statement.

Viacom said the public, not the government, should decide what it is exposed to on the air.

But agreeing to the settlement makes that impossible, says John Dunbar, a project manager at the Center for Public Integrity, a non-partisan government watchdog group. Becoming more acquiescent with FCC oversight may make good business sense, Dunbar said, but that means potentially losing freedom of speech.

"Regardless of what the content of the speech was, I'm not sure that it's such a great thing for there not to be a debate on it," Dunbar said.

Tests find no mad cow disease

WASHINGTON — A five-day mad cow disease scare that briefly rattled the cattle markets and raised concerns among some beef eaters has been put to rest after sophisticated chemical tests on a suspected animal showed no sign of the brain-wasting ailment.

But the "false positive" in the initial screening again raised questions about the Agriculture Department's testing procedures.

Some critics argued that the department had unnecessarily alarmed the public and beef markets by disclosing the inconclusive preliminary results last week.

Influenza health scientist dies at 100

WASHINGTON — Ancel Keys, a University of Minnesota public health scientist who invented the K ration consumed by millions of soldiers in World War II, discovered that saturated fat was a major cause of heart disease and championed the benefits of the Mediterranean diet, died Nov. 20 at his home in Minneapolis. He was 100.

No cause of death was reported. He was still at work earlier this year, analyzing data from his landmark epidemiological study, begun in 1958, of 12,000 middle-aged men in Italy, the Greek Islands, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, Finland, Japan and the United States.

From wire services

Air travelers still pack prohibited items

Security tips

The Associated Press

Tips from the U.S. government for passengers heading to the airport:

- Guns and ammunition cannot be carried into an airplane cabin. Unloaded firearms can be checked if they are placed in a locked, hard-sided container and declared to the airline. Ammunition can be checked if it's in suitable packaging, such as the manufacturer's package.

- Shoes do not need to be removed, but doing so may save time. Even footwear without metal in it may have to be screened a second time for a bomb.

- Don't make any jokes suggesting a threat to security — screeners take them seriously.

- All passengers must remove outer coats and jackets — including suits, sport coats, athletic warm-up jackets and blazers — for X-ray before walking through the metal detectors.

- Travel with unwrapped presents, because if they set off an alarm they'll have to be unwrapped anyway.

- Put undeveloped film in carry-on baggage; the machines used to screen checked bags will damage film.

- Passengers have a right to be screened a second time in a private location.

BY LESLIE MILLER

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Many air travelers in the United States apparently still haven't received the word about leaving their handguns and knives behind when they go to the airport. Not to mention the chain saws, land mines and gunpowder, too.

More than three years after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, air travelers still are trying to carry thousands of potentially deadly items on planes every month.

The Transportation Security Administration, which took over security screening at 450 airports in February 2002, said Tuesday it had confiscated 15.6 million prohibited items, including 2,150 guns, 75,241 boxcutters and 4.7 million knives through the end of October. Billie Vincent, former security chief for the Federal Aviation Administration, blames stupidity and forgetfulness in most cases.

"How do you deal with people who have to know about 9/11 and, even inadvertently, are still trying to get knives onto planes?" he asked.

In October alone, screeners seized ammunition 2,000 times, along with 170,940 knives and 73 guns.

TSA spokeswoman Amy von Walter said local law enforcement officials have arrested people caught with prohibited items in some cases. It's up to local prosecutors to decide on criminal charges, she said.

A college student who hid bags of boxcutters and fake bombs in the lavatories of four Southwest Airlines jets last year pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor as part of a plea bargain with prosecutors.

The student, Nathaniel Heatwole, said he was trying to expose what he called gaps in aviation security. By taking a dangerous weapon aboard an aircraft, he could have been charged with a federal felony that carries a possible 10-year prison sentence.

Government officials believe the 19 Sept. 11 hijackers used boxcutters to commandeer the four jets that crashed that day.

Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio, ranking Democrat on the House aviation subcommittee, said most of the seized items are trivial.

Some have not been so innocent.

The TSA has found knives disguised as lipstick, a radio with a handgun inside, a loaded gun stuffed into a teddy bear. Several people have tried to bring chain saws onto planes.

Cuddly contraband

Federal Transportation Security Administration screeners found 15.6 million prohibited items at the nation's airports between February 2002 and the end of October 2004.

Knives 4.7 million

Box cutters 75,241

Guns 2,150

A loaded handgun was discovered inside this cuddly bear as it was X-rayed in Orlando, Fla., on July 12, 2003.

Items that didn't make it on board

Screeners at Minneapolis International Airport found and confiscated these prohibited items at security checkpoints.

Brass knuckles



Lipstick knife



Grenade torch lighter



SOURCE: Transportation Security Administration

AP

They haven't found everything, though.

DeFazio, who has reviewed classified reports on the screeners' performance, said they have trouble finding artfully concealed objects.

Better X-ray machines are on the market, DeFazio said, but Congress hasn't given the TSA enough money to buy new ones.



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Turkey Tidbits

Early explorers gobbled up wild turkeys

BY GREG LAVINE
Salt Lake Tribune

Before slicing into that Thanksgiving turkey on Thursday, take a moment to consider the bird's international journey to reach the dinner table.

Though native only to the Americas, the domesticated turkey, which has come to be known as the broad-breasted white, voyaged back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean with stops in Spain and England in the 1500s. From its original home somewhere in Central America, culinary connoisseurs held spread the turkey across Europe before returning it to the New World to eventually become the focal point of Thanksgiving.

And while it remains a mystery as to whether the original turkey subspecies exists today, the search for those elusive birds one day could provide genetic information to help their plump, grocery store-bound relatives.

European explorers encountered the strange birds in the early 1500s as they probed into Central America, where indigenous residents raised the domesticated creatures throughout the region, according to "The Wild Turkey: Its History and Domestication" by A.W. Schorger.

"The turkey was domesticated in Central America and Mexico and hauled back by some of the early Spaniards," said Har-

ley Shaw, a retired turkey researcher who formerly worked for the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Shaw said though researchers may never know how the first turkeys were tamed, the birds are easy to domesticate. The crops that ancient farmers planted may have attracted wild turkeys, which were in turn were captured and incorporated into the food supply.

Schorger noted that by 1511, Spanish royalty had requested turkeys be brought to Europe for breeding purposes. This New World delicacy quickly spread by the mid-1500s to places such as Italy, France, Germany, Norway and England.

The popularity of the creatures prompt-

ed the Pilgrims to include turkeys in the supplies sent with the first colonists who founded Jamestown, Va., in 1607, Schorger wrote. Early colonists apparently shunned the plumper-looking wild turkeys roaming the area in favor of their own breeds.

As the colonies evolved in the 1630s, the turkey was strictly for the tables of the well-to-do. A century later, the turkey moved from upper-class fare to commoners' meat. Soon after the pioneers pushed into the Western frontier, the turkeys followed. The birds reached the West Coast in the 1830s, according to Schorger.

In 2003, the nation consumed about 274 million turkeys, including about 46 million at Thanksgiving alone, according to the National Turkey Federation.



Two heritage, or "heirloom," turkeys eye each other at S&B Farm in Petaluma, Calif., earlier this month. In the last three years, farmers in California and across the country have been raising a growing number of turkey breeds that were originally consumed by the pilgrims and have become nearly extinct.

Old turkey breeds resurfacing

Gourmet cooks flocking to poultry farms growing specialty birds

BY DAISY NGUYEN
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — It's a turkey with a proud heritage, so much so that gourmet cooks seem to be flocking to poultry farms this Thanksgiving season to buy one.

Mary and Rick Pitman say the phone at their Fresno-area farm has hardly stopped ringing since summer. The question is always the same: Is there still time to reserve a heritage turkey for Thursday's feast? "There's such a huge demand for these turkeys, we've never seen anything like it," said Mary Pitman. Even a heritage bird's price of \$3 to \$7 a pound — a factory farm-raised turkey costs \$1.40 a pound — doesn't faze the callers.

Consumers with discerning palates say it's a small price to pay for a bird they find tastier and more flavorful than the modern, mass-produced turkeys found in supermarkets. People from as far away as Florida have been calling Sylvia Mavalwalla's farm in Petaluma to order one, and those who live nearby insist on driving straight to her ranch to pick up a fresh bird.

With word about heritages spreading, the Pitmans say they expect to sell 6,000 birds this year, 5,000 more than last year when they first started raising them. Mavalwalla said they sell 110, up from 45 last year.

About 274 million turkeys were raised in the Unit-

ed States in 2003, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and most of them were mass-produced Broadbreasted White turkeys.

A census conducted in 1997 by the Livestock Breeds Conservancy found only 1,335 heritage turkeys in the country. This year, about 20,000 were raised, according to Slow Food USA, which launched a campaign in 2001 to reacquire Americans with the birds.

Preservationists believe revived interest in eight varieties of turkeys such as the American Bronze, Bourbon Red and Narragansett will help keep the food supply diverse and save the breeds from extinction.

People who want to try a heritage bird may have missed out this year if they haven't already ordered, but Lesser says they can reserve early for next year. That way farmers can plan the year's stock. Heritage turkeys take eight months to fully develop, while a commercial turkey has about a 3-month life span. The Broadbreasted White turkeys were developed in the 1950s to come to market faster and fatter, and they've lost the ability to run, fly and breed naturally.

The Pitmans say their turkeys are fed a high-protein grain diet and are given four times as much roaming space as factory-raised turkeys. As a result, their live weights range from 7 to 20 pounds, compared with 27 pounds for an average Broadbreasted White.

Turkey dinner to go

Americans' busy lives fuel rising tide of takeout Thanksgiving meals

BY ESTES THOMPSON
The Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Everyone wants a nice Thanksgiving spread, but not everyone has the time — or culinary know-how — to cook the traditional turkey, dressing, veggies and desserts and get them on the table together.

Those who don't head to the grocery store.

More and more customers are buying complete Thanksgiving meals to take home, according to retailers and food-trend experts.

Nearly every grocery store with a deli now offers the meals, which consumers can order in advance and pick up on Thanksgiving eve.

Last year, Fresh Market's 44 stores from Florida to Virginia sold a few hundred complete meals.

"This year, we sold several thousand," said spokesman Eric Blaesing. "We actually sold out."

Fresh Market and other chains declined to disclose exact numbers of holiday dinner sales, citing competitive reasons. But all said sales are on the rise.

"The aging baby boom population is really driving a lot of that," said Mindy McBain of Gainesville, Ga. McBain writes for "The Shelby Report," a grocery trade publication that tracks trends in the Southeast and Southwest.

"People don't have time to cook like they used to," McBain said. "The stores that are mak-

ing a success out of it are providing high-quality turkey meals."

Fresh Market began offering complete meals last year, Blaesing said. The Greensboro-based chain charges \$49.95 for a meal that serves six to eight people.

"With these big dinners, you have to order everything in advance," he said. "We buy products from vendors and assemble it at the store."

Fresh Market has "some really good pies," Blaesing said, and customers have said they don't



Rico Arenas, head chef at Whole Foods Market in Raleigh, N.C., debones turkeys Monday. The store sells a portion of turkey for those who don't want to buy a whole bird or breast. More and more customers are buying complete Thanksgiving meals to take home, according to retailers and food-trend experts.

tell their guests they are store-bought.

"What's interesting to me personally is you think about Thanksgiving being the home thing ... no more, baby," he said. "I would love to know how many people don't tell people" that dinner was ordered in."

Beware of exploding cell phones

Battery overheating may cause injuries from blast, fire

BY ELIZABETH WOLFE

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Curtis Sathre said it was like a bomb going off. His 13-year-old son Michael stood stunned, his ears ringing, his hand gushing blood and his body covered in black ash.

In a split second last August, fragments from Michael's exploding cell phone had hit him between the eyes and lodged in the ceiling of the family's home in Oceanside, Calif.

Over the past two years, federal safety officials have received 83 reports of cell phones exploding or catching fire, usually because of incompatible, faulty or counterfeit batteries or chargers. Burns to the face, neck, leg and hip are among the dozens of injury reports the agency has received.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission is providing tips for cell phone users to avoid such accidents and has stepped up oversight of the wireless industry. There have been three voluntary battery recalls, and the CPSC is working with companies to create better battery standards.

"CPSC is receiving more and

more reports of incidents involving cell phones, and we're very concerned of the potential for more serious injuries or more fires," said agency spokesman Scott Wolfson.

U.S. phone makers and carriers say most fires and explosions are caused by counterfeit batteries and note that in a country with some 170 million cell phone users, the number of accidents is extremely low.

"Is it a problem? It has turned up, you bet. But statistically it is extraordinarily rare," said John Walls, spokesman for the Cellular Telecommunications & Internet Association.

"But the fact that it has happened certainly has the industry's attention."

Some consumer advocates say the cause goes beyond bad batteries making their way to the market.

They point to the increasing pressure on battery and phone makers to fit more capabilities into small instruments.

"If you're cramming more and more power in a small space, what you're making is a small bomb," said Carl Hilliard, presi-

dent of the California-based Wireless Consumers Alliance, which has been tracking incidents of cell phone fires and explosions.

Though legitimate batteries can go wrong, there is a greater chance that poorly made, counterfeit ones will lack safety devices to detect overheating or overcharging.

The lithium-ion batteries found in most cell phones can overheat if, for example, heat vents are covered.

The CPSC is trying to determine if improved venting is enough by itself to ensure safety.

Hoping to address problems that may lie beyond their supply lines, members of the wireless industry began collaborating last week with the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), a standard-setting organization, to create voluntary design and performance standards for all batteries.

Michael Sathre, who is expected to fully recover from his wounds, was picking his fully charged Verizon LG cell phone off the floor when it exploded by his side. The family chose not to sue and has instead allowed the companies involved and a con-



Michael Sathre, 13, holds the remains of his cell phone at his home Friday in Oceanside, Calif. The phone's battery exploded in August, wounding his hand.

sumer group to come to their house to study the damage in the hopes it won't happen to someone else.

"It took my son two months to decide to even be near a cell phone," said his mother, Cris. "But he needs one."

Cell phone tips

Wireless companies and U.S. federal safety officials offer cell phone safety tips:

- When removing battery, avoid putting it in contact with metal, such as keys or coins.
- Don't expose battery to water or extreme temperatures.

- Avoid crushing battery or dropping it against hard surfaces, especially when fully charged.

- If bought separately, make sure battery and charger are compatible with the phone model. Check that components are not manufactured for phones sold in other countries.

- Buy parts from an authorized dealer, carrier or legitimate outlet, rather than second-hand dealers or off the Internet.

Battery recalls announced this year by the Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Jan. 23: Kyocera Wireless Corp. recalls about 140,000 batteries used in some Kyocera 7135 Smartphones.

- June 24: Verizon Wireless recalls about 50,000 batteries used in some LG-branded TM-510 cell phones.

- Oct. 28: Kyocera recalls about 1 million batteries used in some Kyocera Slider, K400 (Phantom, Blade and Rave models) and 3200 Series cell phones. More product details are also available online at <http://www.cpsc.gov>

From The Associated Press

Message for our men and women in uniform...

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OPINION

Leaving Iraq not as simple as not going in

By MICHAEL KINSLEY

Los Angeles Times

Has there ever before been a war that so many people disapproved of but so few wanted to stop? Have the reasons for starting a war ever been so thoroughly discredited without turning into reasons for ending it?

The Vietnam-era anti-war movement had an agenda: Bring the troops home. Or, in two words — suitable for a picket sign or a T-shirt — “Out now!”

What seems to be today's anti-war position — it was a terrible mistake and it's a terrible mess, but we can't just walk away from it — was actually the pro-war position during Vietnam. In fact, it was close to official government policy for more than half the length of that war.

Today's anti-war cause doesn't even have a movement, to speak of, let alone an agenda. It consists of perhaps 47 percent of the citizenry — the ones who voted for John Kerry — who are in some kind of existential opposition to the war but don't know what they want to do about it.

Meanwhile, U.S. soldiers die by the hundreds and Iraqis by the thousands in a cause these people (and I'm one of them) believe to be a horrible mistake.

Kerry spent months untangling the knots of his Iraq position while tangling new ones even faster. He pounded George W. Bush and the phantom weapons of mass destruction, and he mocked Bush's confusion of Osama bin Laden with Saddam Hussein. Kerry said, famously, that Bush's invasion

of Iraq was “the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time.” So was he in favor of ending it? No, his position was that he would try, but not promise, to bring the troops home in four years. Four years! U.S. involvement in World War II lasted 3½.

Bush had a good point when he wondered how, as commander in chief, Kerry could ask American soldiers to die for the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time. Of course, that problem does not vindicate Bush's belief that Iraq is the right war in the right etc. etc. etc.

But Bush's apparently sincere belief does relieve him from needing to explain why he doesn't want the war to end now. Kerry's studiously confused position was not, or not just, a political stratagem. It was an accurate reflection of the views of his constituency. Most of them deplore the war, but only a tiny fraction favor an immediate pull-out. Anyone who opposes the war but isn't ready to demand peace needs an answer to the question, “Why on Earth not?”

There are answers, possibly even adequate answers. But none of them shine with the kind of obvious truth that makes the question unnecessary, let alone uninteresting, which is how it is being treated. The answers fall in two categories, each associated with a secretary of state.

The Henry Kissinger answer is, in a word, credibility. A superpower that announces a goal and gives up without achieving it will not be super for long. In the end, President Nixon and Kissinger added five years to the length of the Vietnam War, and we lost it anyway. Did that add to our superpower



THE FAYETTEVILLE (N.C.) OBSERVER/AP

Capt. Jon Stewart, commander, Company A, 1st Battalion, 252nd Armor Regiment, gives out a stuffed toy to a kindergarten student at a school in As Sadiyah, Iraq, on Sunday.

credibility? Well, maybe. In the Kissingerian world of High Strategy, a reputation for pigheaded stupidity can be almost as valuable as a reputation for wise persistence. ...

The Colin Powell answer goes by the nickname “Pottery Barn,” referring to the alleged policy of that purveyor of yuppieware that “if you break it, you own it.” In fact, Pottery Barn's breakage policy is much kinder and gentler than that. But it's certainly true that a well-brought-up foreign policy doesn't occupy a country, wreck it and move on like

a rock band checking out of a hotel room. The question is whether at this point we're actually helping to tidy up, or only making a bigger mess. ...

An American general in Vietnam famously said, “We had to destroy the village to save it.” This has become the definitive expression of the macabre futility of war. Last week, we destroyed an entire city in order to save it (progress!), but our capacity to find that sort of thing ironic seems to have become shriveled and harmless.

Michael Kinsley is the Times' editorial and opinion editor.

Modern-day pilgrim's journey no walk in the park

Twice in the last year and a half, I have been in Plymouth, Mass., where the Pilgrims landed after they first stopped at Provincetown on the tip of Cape Cod.

Bill Tammeus



us are pilgrims.

The idea of pilgrimage did not start with the English Separatists who came to the New World in 1620. (Nor did the idea of setting aside a day to give thanks.) As the Catholic Encyclopedia notes, the concept of pilgrimage has roots tens of thousands of years old in the idea of local deities with limited authority.

“Hence,” the encyclopedia says, “when some man belonging to a mountain tribe found himself in the plain and was in need of divine help, he made a pilgrimage back to the hills to petition it from his gods.”

To be a pilgrim means to be on a journey, to be searching for a place, a person or even (and maybe especially) for God — something or someone to help make sense of who we are and what we're supposed to be about. To live an unexamined life is never to be a pilgrim.

But pilgrimage can also be more interior in nature, as is the case with someone in my extended family. She has been on a pilgrimage recently back into her childhood to see if she could find the origin of a destructive behavioral pattern she's experienced through

much of her life. When she's enraged, she often simply shuts down emotionally instead of understanding her anger.

Her pilgrimage, aided by a counselor, has led her to various events in her childhood that gave her a deep fear of abandonment. As a result of that fear, she wouldn't risk abandonment but would curl up, shut her eyes and hope everything either goes away or turns out all right.

Because of the discovery she made on her interior pilgrimage, she's now trying to fix that.

We live in what's often called a “therapeutic culture,” in which concepts of evil and sin get truncated into something less scary. In our narcissistic age, the culture encourages us to imagine that to fix ourselves all we need is the right therapy, self-help books, counseling, meditation techniques and, most of all, the right medications. Some combination of those things will allow us to reach the goal of our personal pilgrimage.

And what does the therapeutic culture tell

us that goal should be? A personal nirvana, in which all our needs and wants are met.

So when we start a personal pilgrimage, it helps to remember that no matter what the culture says, the true goal is to make us whole (precisely the goal of my family member) so we can be in healthy relationships. The goal is not to find someone or something to blame for why we aren't whole, though it may help to know that, and counseling and medications may be needed along the way.

The religious pedigree of the pilgrimage idea is impressive. Islam requires adherents who are healthy and can afford it to make a pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, birthplace of their faith. The Christian Crusades in medieval times were first dreamed up as a way to make the path from Europe to Jerusalem safe for Christian pilgrims.

And Buddhists make pilgrimages to Kapilavastu, Benares and other places connected with Buddha's life.

While many religions are familiar with humans going on pilgrimages to seek the di-

vine, Christianity posits the idea of God making a pilgrimage in search of — and to rescue — humanity through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. One reason this story has such pull on the hearts of so many people is its audacity — describing God as a pilgrim seeking out people.

But, of course, the idea of sacred pilgrimage also gets twisted at times. In early Christian history, pilgrimages were meted out as punishment. This disciplinary system sent countless people off on journeys of terrible hardship to make up for their crimes or sins and to find redemption.

However strange and intricate the history of pilgrimage, it is an idea deeply embedded in the human psyche. We sense some emptiness in us or a profound desire to experience what the ancient Celts called “thin places,” where eternity touches time, and we set off on our searches. It's an honorable instinct that deserves our homage at Thanksgiving.

Bill Tammeus is a columnist for The Kansas City (Mo.) Star.

Mallard Fillmore

By BRUCE TINSLEY



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IN THE WORLD

Ukrainian premier declared election winner

BY JIM HEINTZ

The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — Election officials on Wednesday declared Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich the winner of Ukraine's presidential election, sharpening a crisis sparked by the opposition candidate's allegations that the vote was brazenly fraudulent.

Yanukovich won 49.46 percent of Sunday's vote, against Viktor Yushchenko's 46.61 percent, the commission said in announcing the final results.

Petro Poroshenko, a pro-Yushchenko lawmaker, said that "the members of the Central Election Commission have taken on themselves the responsibility for a coup d'état."

"Now the streets will speak," he said.

Numerous fistfights broke out between lawmakers after the results were announced.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said Wednesday the United States cannot accept the results of elections in Ukraine, which the opposition says was marred by fraud.

Powell warned "there will be consequences" for the United States' relationship with Ukraine as a result of the developments in the former Soviet bloc nation.

A huge crowd of Yushchenko supporters has gathered in central Kiev over the past three days to push for the election results to be overturned and Yushchenko declared the winner. Within minutes of the commission's announcement, some protesters began heading from their encampment on Kiev's central avenue to the presidential administration building.

The building was the scene of a tense standoff Tuesday night, when protesters faced a phalanx of shield-wielding riot police.

Outside the election commission, throngs of Yanukovich supporters celebrated by drinking vodka and shouting their candidate's name.

Inside, pro-Yushchenko lawmakers chanted "Shame! Shame!" and Yanukovich's supporters applauded.

No Yushchenko supporters were seen outside the building, but there were fears that the two sides eventually could clash, with the official announcement of the results heating emotions in both camps.



Thousands of demonstrators waving Ukrainian flags gather Wednesday to protest alleged fraud in the presidential elections on the main square of the Ukrainian capital Kiev.



Three freed hostages, from left, Annetta Flanagan of Northern Ireland, Philippine diplomat Angelito Nayan, and Shiqpe Hebbi of Kosovo, leave the Kabul palace of Afghan President Hamid Karzai on Wednesday. The three U.N. workers were freed Tuesday after being held hostage.

Freed U.N. hostages ready to rejoin families

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Three U.N. workers freed by kidnappers in Afghanistan rejoined their families Wednesday and said they were sustained through 27 days of captivity by thoughts of their family and friends.

Looking tired but happy a day after their release, Philippine diplomat Angelito Nayan, Annetta Flanagan from Northern Ireland and Shiqpe Hebbi of Kosovo met privately with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

They also had a tearful reunion with colleagues at a U.N. residence and made a statement that cast no light on their mysterious

abduction, but made clear their yearning to share the "wonderful feeling" of freedom with loved ones.

"The hope of getting back together with them kept us going," Flanagan read from a sheet of paper, Nayan and Hebbi at her side.

Later Wednesday, Nayan said farewell to officials at Kabul airport before boarding a U.N. plane. Officials did not divulge his immediate destination.

Officials insist they did not agree to pay a ransom or free any jailed militants to secure their release. They have declined to identify the kidnappers or to explain how the hostages became free.

Blair accused of using fear as political tactic

LONDON — Prime Minister Tony Blair faced growing accusations Wednesday that his government is playing politics with fear and using the threat of terrorism to boost its chances of re-election.

Political rivals are outraged at comments by Cabinet minister Peter Hain, who insists Britain would be safer under the current Labour government.

"He is trying to create a climate of fear in this country which I think is a very dangerous thing to do," said Michael Ancram, foreign affairs spokesman for the main opposition Conservative Party. "He is playing party politics with an issue which really should be above and beyond party politics."

From The Associated Press

Diplomats: Iran seeking exception to uranium enrichment activities

BY GEORGE JAHN

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — Iran is seeking a last-minute exception to its commitment to stop all uranium enrichment activities by demanding the right to operate dozens of centrifuges, diplomats said Wednesday.

The Iranians have told the International Atomic Energy Agency — the U.N. nuclear watchdog — that they want to operate about 24 of the centrifuges "for research purposes," the diplomats said.

They have asked the IAEA to exempt that equipment from agency seals meant to ensure the enrichment program — which can be used to make nuclear weapons — is completely at a standstill, one of the diplomats said.

The move comes on the eve of an IAEA board meeting that will examine Iran's compliance to international demands meant to reduce suspicions about its nuclear activities. Among them are calls for a suspension of all enrichment and related activities — something Iran agreed to earlier this month in a deal with European negotiators.

A senior EU diplomat who is also a delegate to the board meeting said the European Union was resisting the demand, which it viewed as contravening a Nov. 7 Paris agreement negotiated between Iran and Germany, France and Britain, on behalf of the European Union.

That deal commits Tehran to full suspension of enrichment

and all related activities while the two sides discuss a pact meant to provide Iran with EU technical and economic aid and other concessions.

Iran said Monday it froze all uranium enrichment programs, weakening a U.S. effort to refer Tehran's suspect nuclear activities to the U.N. Security Council.

Secretary of State Colin Powell, in Egypt for an international conference on Iraq, says America and Iran could restore relations one day, but only after Iran has changed course on terrorism and nuclear development.

"It is not in the best interest of international relations for there to be a permanent enmity or animosity between two states," the outgoing secretary told ABC on Tuesday.

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China executes man who slashed children 25 attacked with kitchen knife at grade school

The Associated Press

BEIJING — A man who slashed 25 children with a kitchen knife at a grade school in eastern China was executed Wednesday, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Jia Qingyou, 36, had appealed his sentence at the Shandong High Court, but it upheld the original ruling, saying the Sept. 20 crime was "especially cruel and the results were especially serious," Xinhua reported. Jia also held a 9-year-old girl hostage for an hour before he was captured by police.

Xinhua earlier said Jia was the father of a girl at the school in Ying County. He had a quarrel with another local resident and looked for the person at the school when he dropped his daughter off.

When he couldn't find the person, he began attacking the children with a kitchen knife, Xinhua said. Twenty-five children were wounded in the attack.

"The method of committing the crime was especially vile and caused great harm to society," the high court was quoted as saying in its Nov. 4 ruling.

In the worst recent school violence, an employee with a history of schizophrenia killed one student and slashed 14 children and three teachers on Aug. 4 at a Beijing kindergarten.



November 19, 2004

The American Thanksgiving holiday is traditionally a time for reflection, fellowship, and the giving of thanks. I can't think of a better time for us all, a long way from home and family, to reflect on the many things we have to be grateful for.

We can be grateful for the profound difference we are making in the lives of others here in Iraq. Freedom has taken root and has begun to grow. Your courage and your commitment have given freedom a chance. For the rest of your lives, each of you will know that you went into harm's way to give others a chance for a better life.

As members of a coalition, we can all be grateful for the support and resolve of our partners here in Iraq. Together we will succeed, and in succeeding we will help make the world not only a safer place, but a better place.

We can be grateful for our comrades here, the men and women with whom we work each day to achieve our noble and historic mission. The individual bonds we are forging here will be with us forever. And, we can be grateful for the sacrifices of those who have given their lives that others, both here in Iraq and at home, can live in peace.

Finally, we can be grateful for the love and support of our families and loved ones whose sacrifices and strength underpin our every success.

Sincerely,

George W. Casey, Jr.
General, United States Army
Commanding

Settlement urged

VIENNA, Austria — Lawyers representing the families of 155 skiers and snowboarders killed in an alpine cable car fire in 2000 were pressing Austrian officials Wednesday for the more than \$155 million in compensation for the relatives.

Attorneys from Austria, Germany and the United States said they planned to deliver an "ultimatum" to a commission working to determine a cash settlement for those who lost loved ones in the Nov. 11, 2000, disaster.

They are seeking \$65 million from the Austrian government; \$65 million from Gletscherbahnen Kaprun Capital AG, the company that operated the cable car; and \$26 million from the province of Salzburg and the city of Kaprun where the disaster occurred.

The victims were headed for a day of fun on a glacier atop the Kitzsteinhorn mountain near Kaprun, a popular ski resort 60 miles south of Salzburg in the heart of Austria's Alps, when the cable car bringing them to the summit caught fire in a tunnel.

Only 12 people managed to escape the crowded car as it turned into a fireball, sucking fresh air into the tunnel and creating a chimney effect that produced heat so intense only the reinforced steel skeleton of the car was left intact.

German breaks record

FRANKFURT, Germany — A 38-year-old with a psychology, education and computer science needed only 11.8 seconds to calculate the 13th root of a 100-digit number in a head, setting a new record, organizers said.

Onlookers with electronic calculators needed more time to solve the problem that Gert Mittring figured on his own, with two impromptu checking the time, at a math museum in the small German town of Giessen near Frankfurt in western Germany.

But his feat will not be in the Guinness Book of World Records, because the book no longer recognizes root calculations of random numbers due to the difficulty of standardizing the challenge, spokesman Sam Knight said Wednesday.

French anguish

PARIS — General Electric employee Nadine Meslin says dealing with computer software in any language is tricky, but it's even worse when you're French and the jargon is in English.

So what's the answer? Sue! French employees of a GE branch that makes medical equipment, tired of struggling with company e-mails, manuals and meetings in English, took their fight to court on Tuesday.

The employees claim English has become the main language in their branch of GE in recent years for instruction manuals, company e-mails and meetings. Older employees, hired when English was not a requirement, find it particularly hard to adapt, they claim.

From The Associated Press

Pregnant sister shot

CA SACRAMENTO — A 19-year-old man was arrested over the weekend on suspicion of shooting his pregnant 21-year-old sister to death and critically wounding his brother-in-law.

Police said they were told by relatives at the scene that the 19-year-old had a fistfight with his sister's 24-year-old husband, then got a handgun and shot him four times.

At some point, the man allegedly shot his sister once in the chest, police said. She and her unborn child were pronounced dead at the scene by firefighters.

Police did not release the names of those involved.

Constitutional conflict

AR LITTLE ROCK — A federal judge said a 2003 Arkansas law intended to shield minors from pornographic material in stores and libraries violates the U.S. Constitution. The law required books, magazines and videos containing material "harmful to minors" to be kept separate from other displayed material. The judge said the law restricted access and display of non-obscene material.

Breezy future

MA HYANNIS — A long-anticipated federal report on a proposed wind farm in Nantucket Sound says the project would provide significant benefits, with little long-term environmental damage.

The 4,000-page draft report prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, released Tuesday, indicates the project would likely cause less environmental damage than many have feared.

The 26-page executive summary also cites benefits such as reduced emissions from power plants burning fossil fuels, an increase in year-round jobs and diversification in New England's fuel supply, which is heavily dependent on oil and natural gas.

The report's release has started a 60-day public comment period, during which four public hearings will be held.

The \$700 million proposal that Cape Wind Associates proposed three years ago for Horseshoe Shoal has drawn fierce opposition from boaters, business owners, fishermen, wildlife protection groups and property owners.

Housing project burns

CA ALAMEDA — For many residents of the Bessie Coleman Court apartments, this was going to be the first holiday season in a long time when they would be able to cook their own turkey dinners.

Many of the formerly homeless women and their children had recently moved into the transitional and permanent housing in Alameda, and the place was just starting to feel like home.

But a fire late last week destroyed their modest homes. As quickly as flames and smoke spread through the 15 small apartments, more than 20 people were sent back to the brink of homelessness.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

ness.

"I'm kind of worried that people might throw in the towel because something like this can be so discouraging," said Elaine de Coligny, executive director of the Building Futures With Women and Children, one of the nonprofits that operate the housing project. "We're about trying to end people's homelessness."

Making room for horses

KY LEXINGTON — The graves of 18 horses, including Kentucky Derby winner "Plaudit," may be exhumed to allow two retailers to build stores. Developer Patrick Madden asked the city to rezone 58 acres of the property to build a Home Depot and a Super Wal-Mart. Madden said he plans to move the horse cemetery to a more prominent spot within the shopping center.

Crackdown on crabbing

CA SAN FRANCISCO — State game wardens out to nab illegal crabbers in the San Francisco Bay have seen it all: Dungeness crabs stuffed in hubcaps, backpacks, purses and secret compartments. They have heard it all, too, including lines like "Those aren't my crabs in the back of my truck."

Saturday night was no different. The first driver the wardens pulled over at Municipal Pier in San Francisco

opened his trunk to reveal a single legal red rock crab in a bucket. But further inspection turned up a black backpack crawling with six illegal Dungeness crabs.

The man got a ticket — an infraction that could end up costing him more than \$650 — and pointers on how to tell a Dungeness crab from a rock crab, a distinction he clearly already understood, seeing he had stashed the Dungeness in a backpack.

Change to tradition

NC WILMINGTON — Security concerns at a city water plant are threatening a holiday tradition in which residents decorate a centuries-old oak.

Security consultants, as required by homeland security laws, found that a fence is necessary around the plant to keep it safe from terror threats.

The proposed fence would prohibit people from gathering around the tree, as they have been doing every holiday season since 1928.

Many city officials said they want to try to preserve the tradition if possible.

Others consider the tree an eyesore.

"That is an ugly tree," council member Jim Quinn said of the oak, which has since been damaged in a 1985 storm. "Just because you have been doing it a long time doesn't mean it is the best thing you could be doing."

DNA analyst fired

MD GERMANTOWN — An analyst at Cellmark's DNA testing laboratory was fired for allegedly falsifying data. Cellmark, the world's largest private DNA testing firm, says the falsification occurred in only 20 tests, but says it's investigating other cases the analyst worked on. Some of the 20 tests were performed for the Los Angeles Police Department and some were done for the FBI.

Contractors killed

TN KNOXVILLE — EOD Technology, a munitions cleanup and security contractor, confirmed that two employees were killed in Iraq last week. Aaron Iversen, 38, and David Randolph, 33, died during an insurgent attack on their military convoy near Baghdad, raising the company's fatality toll to five in the past year. EODT specializes in unexploded ordnance cleanup and security services for the U.S. military. Most employees have served in the military.

Wrench in sewage plans

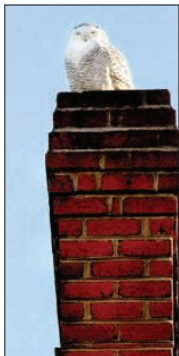
NH HOOKSETT — Plans to expand sewage plants in two New Hampshire communities are on hold because of decreased oxygen levels in the Merrimack River. Pollution in the Merrimack River is increasing because of the population boom in southern New Hampshire. Treated sewage pumped into the river is driving oxygen levels down — choking fish and other aquatic life.



Please, help me cope Arthur-Lovington's Chase Coleman talks to teammate Ken Crossman, left, after losing to Stockton, 18-13, in the 2004 Illinois High School Association Class 1A Football Playoffs semifinals in Arthur, Ill.



Dedicated to Christmas Danny O'Sullivan secures a cable around the trunk of Dallas' civic Christmas tree outside of Dallas City Hall.



On the lookout

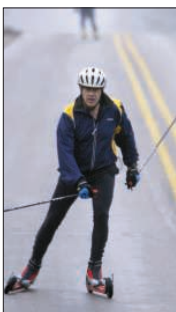
A snowy owl is perched on a chimney top in Hazleton, Pa.



Wet charity case From left, United Way President Jason Holmes, Campaign Chair Rocky Gill and Board Chair Leo Rossler, all of United Way of Tyler/Smith County jump into the pool at Tyler Junior College in Tyler, Texas, as part of a deal for meeting a fund-raising goal.



Yummy snack Digger, one of Elizabeth Chambers' hamsters, eats part of a hot dog during the Terryville Lions Club-sponsored health and safety fair at the Lyceum in Terryville, Conn.



Road skiing With fog and mist in the air, Mike Tarnow roller skis down Kropa Road on Old Mission Peninsula near Traverse, Mich.



Smiling for a good cause Ashley Hopson, 12, right, is having a good time along with other Danville High School Junior High students delivering almost 2,000 canned goods in an assembly line to the pantry at the First Baptist Church in Danville, Iowa.

Prices on the rise

DC WASHINGTON — Plans for a baseball stadium in Southeast are heating up the area's real estate market. Real estate agents said prices for rowhouses around the site have risen from \$200,000 to \$240,000 in the past six months. Critics of the planned \$440 million stadium fear it will push poor residents out of the area. City officials said they're setting aside affordable housing.

Back on the job

CA SAN FRANCISCO — Unionized hotel workers in San Francisco agreed to return to work following an eight-week lockout, dealing a major boost to the city's tourism industry on the eve of the busy holiday season. About 4,000 maids, bellhops, cooks and other hourly wage earners returned to their jobs Tuesday while contract negotiations continue, Mayor Gavin Newsom announced.

Newsom said the group representing 14 luxury hotels agreed to end the lockout of union workers for two months. Negotiations were to resume after Thanksgiving.

Warning the bench

DE WILMINGTON — The state will spend between \$500,000 and \$600,000 for improvements to the heating system at the New Castle County Courthouse. Since the building opened two years ago, workers and visitors have complained the 14-story building gets too cold in the winter. The state will try to recoup the cost from the firm that designed the building.

Packed prisons

KY LOUISVILLE — Kentucky's prison population has exploded by 600 percent since 1970 and will keep growing because of "irrational" penalties enacted by lawmakers, according to a study. University of Kentucky law professor Robert Lawson, who wrote Kentucky's penal code, says the state's budget for housing prisoners has risen from \$7 million to more than \$300 million since 1970 and is threatening to bankrupt the system.

Malpractice protest

MD HAGERSTOWN — Dozens of physicians in Washington County have postponed elective surgeries or temporarily closed their offices to protest rising malpractice insurance premiums. Protest organizers say 50 doctors are participating and they've been joined by physicians at Prince George's Hospital Center. State lawmakers say they'll meet this week to discuss the issue.

Penalty pushed aside

FL TALLAHASSEE — A judge temporarily halted a recently approved state constitutional amendment that would revoke the license of any doctor who commits three acts of medical malpractice. The circuit court judge sided in part with hospitals seeking to clarify the measure through the Legislature or the courts before it is implemented. The amendment was approved by 70 percent of voters this month.

State workers get raise

RI PROVIDENCE — Gov. Don Carcieri has approved nearly \$350,000 in raises for some mid- and high-level state employees.

Those receiving the raises include top managers in the Departments of Administration and Environmental Management. Most raises go to lower-grade employees. The pay changes took effect last Friday, according to The Providence Journal.

The largest raise appears to go to Steven Wright, superintendent of state parks. He's to get \$12,500, which bumps his salary to \$73,000. Officials said Wright has assumed additional duties, including supervising the DEM's Web site.

Flu shots on the way

TN NASHVILLE — Tennessee is getting 137,000 more flu vaccines, the state health commissioner said. The additional doses will go first to residents in long-term care, then to hospital employees who care for patients and people in high-risk groups.

Bike messenger killed

NY NEW YORK — A bicycle messenger was killed when the door of a delivery truck opened in his path, knocking him to the ground, police said.

The accident happened shortly after 9 a.m. Thursday when the 42-year-old man, whose name was not released pending notification of his family, was making a delivery on Eighth Avenue between West 48th and West 49th streets, police said.

The passenger door of a truck parked on Eighth Avenue opened in his face, sending him sprawling head-first onto the pavement.

DMV test arrested

CA REDWOOD CITY — A Department of Motor Vehicles employee has been arrested on suspicion of fondling seven teenage girls during driving tests, according to authorities.

Calvin Hoang Cat, 37, will be charged with 14 misdemeanor counts in connection with incidents that happened from July through September, said Steve Wagstaffe, chief deputy district attorney for San Mateo County.

"He was fondling the private areas of victims who were being conducted," Wagstaffe said. "Most were just 16, and all were taking their first test."

Escape plan foiled

FL TAMPA — Three jail inmates and a victim were arrested Wednesday as he attempted to buy guns from an undercover sheriff's deputy, according to the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office.

The sheriff's intelligence unit had been tipped to the plan and conducted a sting operation. Ibarra was supposed to buy the four weapons and pass them along to an inmate who worked outside at the facility, deputies said. The inmate was then supposed to smuggle them inside to Ibarra's brother and two other men, deputies said.

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Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

NFL looks to McCartney for super show

Paul McCartney will headline the 2005 Super Bowl halftime show as the National Football League goes mainstream after the controversy over this year's show.

"There's nothing bigger than being asked to perform at the Super Bowl," McCartney said in a statement. "We're looking forward to rocking the millions at home and in the stadium."

"As one of the world's most beloved artists and incomparable live entertainers, Paul McCartney will deliver an inspirational performance," said Steve Bornstein, the NFL's executive vice president of media.



McCartney

Actress apologizes for late appearance

Salma Hayek has apologized for missing the opening of a new theater in her hometown, saying she arrived late because of delays during the shooting of a movie she's making elsewhere in Mexico.

Hayek, who was born in Coahuila de Zaragoza, Mexico, in the Gulf Coast state of Veracruz, had planned to attend the inauguration of a new 17,000-seat municipal theater and stay for a concert by opera star Luciano Pavarotti Friday night.

The 36-year-old actress, who has been in the central state of Durango working on "Bandidas" with co-star Penelope Cruz, later issued an apology to Veracruz radio and TV stations.

Hayek's screen credits include "Frida," "Once Upon a Time in Mexico" and "After the Sunset."



Hayek

Beach Music Awards announced

The Rickey Godfrey Band took home awards for best group album, song and group at the Carolina Beach Music Awards, which celebrated its 10th anniversary.

Craig Ireland received awards for best male vocalist, entertainer and collaboration at Sunday's five-hour show. Beach music's version of the Grammy Awards also featured appearances by Percy Sledge and Bill Pinkney of the Drifters.

The awards, in Myrtle Beach, S.C., recognize achievement in beach music industry, the distinctive brand of rhythm and blues associated with bag dancing, the Carolinas and the Grand Strand. Artists, entertainers, disc jockeys and fans received awards in front of some 2,000 attendees.

Rocker wants his guitar returned

Former Poison singer Bret Michaels has asked fans to help him find his custom-made guitar, which was apparently stolen at the close of a recent concert.

Michaels' red-and-white Holden six-string electric guitar with a picture of a skull wearing a top hat disappeared during a Nov. 12 concert at McCool's bar in Valparaiso, Ind., according to Michaels' Web site.

The Porter County Crime Stoppers program has offered a reward of up to \$1,000 for information about the theft. A photo of Michaels with the guitar was posted on the singer's Web site. A message said: "This guitar has a lot of sentimental value to Bret and we just want to get it back."



Michaels

Veteran actors land TV roles

Veteran actors Orson Bean and Charles Durning have taken on TV roles that touch on very different periods in their youths.

Bean, 76, who was blacklisted for a year during the anti-communist fervor of the 1950s, played a former communist sympathizer now suspected in an unsolved 1953 murder case in an episode of CBS' "Cold Case."

Durning, 81, a decorated World War II veteran, appears in CBS' "NCIS" as a man who claims to have murdered a fellow Marine while fighting at Iwo Jima in 1945.

Stories and photos from wire services



Pixar/Disney

When a family of superheroes is forced into hiding in the suburbs, nothing is quite as normal as it appears in the animated adventure "The Incredibles." Bob Parr, aka Mr. Incredible, gives his wife Helen a hand around the house.

Superheroes' human side

'The Incredibles' fleshes out the mundane part of family life

BY ANTHONY BREZNICAN
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES

Superheroes are typically loners, not family guys. The powers of Superman, Spider-Man, Batman make them outcasts from the very society they protect and drives them to hide their powers from even close confidants like Lois Lane, Aunt May and Commissioner Gordon.

But what if Wonder Woman was a soccer mom? Or the Hulk was a workaholic suburban dad who longed for the good old glory days? This is the comic book genre-teasing premise of "The Incredibles," the latest computer animated fable from Pixar that follows the impressive pedigree of "Finding Nemo," "A Bug's Life" and "The Toy Story" movies.

"I just thought it was [a] silly idea for a superhero movie," said writer-director Brad Bird, a veteran of "The Simpsons" who also made the cult-favorite cartoon "The Iron Giant." "The concept is a superhero that is a little past his prime. Is he married? What if he married a superhero and who is that person?"

And what would it be like raising super-powered kids? Can you put the Flash in a corner for being hyperactive? Or ground a teenage Supergirl? These are the dilemmas facing Bob and Helen Parr (also known as Mr. Incredible and Elastigirl) as they try to live with their children as a quiet, normal family following a government ban on the display of superhuman powers.

In "The Incredibles," after a series of accidents in which superheroes cause more problems than they resolved, all so-called "Supers" have gone into a sort of witness protection program to shield them from would-be villains who may seek to exploit the ban on their abilities.

After Bird found that many of his projects had difficulty getting approval from studios and he struggled to balance his career with his marriage and three sons began to envision himself in the same position as his characters. "I was feeling that movies were magical things. I love superhero movies and spy movies and action movies and I love my families, the family that I grew up in and the family that I have now with my wife and sons," Bird said. "It's all the stuff that I love rolled to-

gether into one crazy story."

Mr. Incredible is voiced by Craig T. Nelson, the sturdy patriarch from such movies as "Poltergeist" and the TV sitcom "Coach." He said that, like "Finding Nemo," this superhero story delves beyond jokes and action to explore the modern family dynamic. He liked the idea of a person who wished he could make a big difference in the world, but never realized what a big difference he made in his own little home.

"He's this guy who is absolutely driven to keep people safe, and without that he's nothing. He's lost. He's in a vacuum," Nelson said. "But he does have his family, and he's trying [to] hang on to them the best way he can."

While Mr. Incredible sneaks out at night to rescue people from minor disasters with his ice-blasting old friend Frozone (voiced by Samuel L. Jackson), his wife (voiced by Holly Hunter) juggles their teenage daughter Violet, their troublemaking son Dash and their baby Jack-Jack.

But a villain named Syndrome (Jason Lee) is on the prowl — a one-time comic book geek who's using a fortune earned from inventing gadgets to round up and destroy the heroes he once idolized who shunned him as a pest.

"He is the non-superhero who is holding a grudge," said Lee, who played a comic-book fanatic in "Chasing Amy." "Through those insecurities, he's trying to take over the world and thinks he's better than a real superhero. He's the guy who didn't get the girl in high school, and people made fun of him for being a nerd, and instead of being able to be happy with the power and money he has now, he has to shove it back into everyone's face."

Soon the whole family is united — a la the Fantastic Four — in the fight against Syndrome's mechanized terror, where they learn to disarm weapons of cartoonish destruction while learning to cooperate with and trust one another. Each of the Incredibles has a power that is symbolic about their place in life, Bird said.

Bird chose a non-actor for the voice of Violet — essayist and pop-culture writer Sarahowell, whose very gungroup voice is familiar to listeners of the public radio show "This American Life."

If "The Incredibles" proves to be as big a hit as its Pixar predecessors, Bird said it will be for the same reasons that have made blockbusters out of movies of traditional comic-book heroes — the attention to the human part of superheroes.

"I think that people are fascinated by flawed gods," he said. "I think the idea of powerful beings that have weaknesses of character is something that has always been fascinating, part of mythology, and it's only natural that it would survive to this day under the guise of superheroes."

"He's this guy who is absolutely driven to keep people safe, and without that he's nothing."

Craig T. Nelson

Actor who is the voice of Mr. Incredible

Horoscope

The moon transits through sensual Taurus just when there is so much for our senses to enjoy! Appreciate the heavenly sights, smells and tastes. Do go slowly, though, putting half of what you think you can eat on your plate — your whole mood will be better. Tensions building toward the full moon tomorrow make social discourse more interesting.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(November 25). Thrilling developments in your life bring new hope for personal fulfillment. You are finally able to accept the idea that you deserve romance and adventure in your life — without quit! Water signs (Pisces, Scorpio, Cancer) draw you in with tremendous affection. A mentor helps you determine a more direct career path in January, bringing a windfall.

ARIES (March 21-April 19).

When family gets together, exaggerations are made, inappropriate roles are designated, and old baggage is laid out on the table. And, somehow, this only makes things wonderful. There's nothing like home, sweet home.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20).

One way to reduce stress is not to give yourself too much time to worry about things. Some adaptation of Parkinson's Law applies: The preparation of Thanksgiving dinner expands to fill the time available for its completion.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

Loved ones expect something of you that just isn't what you're about now. When you stretch your idea of what they can add to your life, they do the same for you. Infinite possibilities are born out of your faith in someone.

CANCER (June 22-July 22).

There is a saint called Theresa known as the Saint of the Little Ways, who believed in doing the little things well and with great love. This is precisely the attitude you adopt now, and you flourish because of it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

The burden of entertainment falls on you.

You've had your share of shenanigans and will share the stories! Someone near and dear serves as a reminder of how not to behave. This person could use your guidance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

You're the expert, but you still need help. Enroll younger and older folks, as multi-generational efforts are luckiest. At the end of the day you feel competent and it's nice to know that others respect your abilities.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

Verbalize your thanks, and show your appreciation in action. Your gratitude helps others discover their own. Your thoughtfulness and generosity toward those who don't have as much as you make you truly rich.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).

Family members may get jealous about who goes where and stays with whom. Happiness is adjusting your expectations. Take care of yourself first, and you'll have plenty of attention to give to others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

Sure, you're fabulous under pressure, but who needs it? When you refuse to obligate yourself, you'll find yourself in the unique position to give joyfully and more than anyone expects of you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

A glorious realization: There are many ways that you've been provided sustenance for your physical, intellectual and spiritual life — ways you couldn't have dreamed up had you been asked to. Someone out there cares.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

An overriding feeling that the best is yet to come turns out to be more than optimism — it's true. In the meantime, you're doing all you can to give to those who would cry for what you take for granted.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

Your domestic expertise and easygoing leadership style will create a comfortable vibe for everyone who congregates around you. You're not judging, and no one is judging you. Being relaxed makes romance possible.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



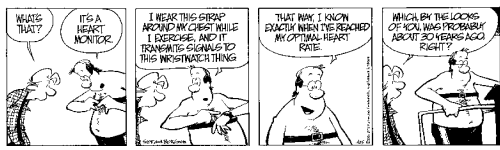
Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



Better or Worse



Peanuts



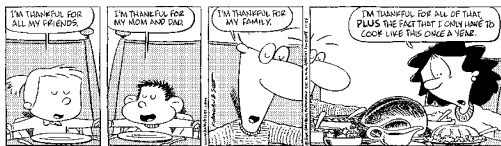
Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



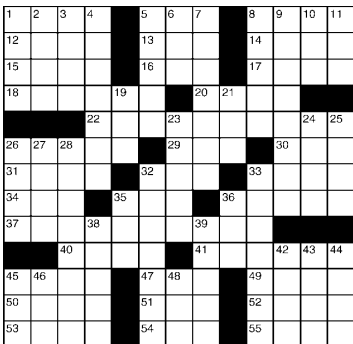
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Hoofbeat sound
5 It's often served as an unsc
8 Unscorted
12 Consort of Zeus
13 Tulsa sch.
14 Like some nocturnal birds
15 Model who wed David Bowie
16 Feathery accessory
17 Shaft of light
18 Blotched critter
20 Comical Caroline
22 Not gradually
26 Kayoes
29 CSA soldier
30 Rhoda's mom
31 "Breaky Heart"
32 "Krazy —"
33 Wield scissors
34 Monk's address
35 Wonderful, in raspeak
36 Olympic coasters
37 Ragtime dance
40 Cat's comment
41 Rejoices
45 Thor's dad
47 Possess
49 Exceptional
50 Hardly muscular
51 Wade opponent
52 Always
53 "I, Claudius" costume

- 54 Jones' partner
55 Benefit

Down

- 1 Stylish
2 Tony of golf lore
3 Word with history or hygiene
4 Very scared
5 Computer language
6 Acapulco gold
7 Barbershop group?
8 Serious
9 Making minor adjustments
10 Carte lead-in
11 Workout site
19 Lettuce variety
21 Center
23 Conspiration
24 Falco of "The Sopranos"
25 Kennel din
26 Crazy
27 Beige
28 Dream prince?
32 Entry in an index
33 O.R. strings
35 — volatile
36 Bagel topper
38 Nairobi's land
39 Get more magazines
42 Popocatepetl flow
43 Arduous journey
44 Withered
45 Make up your mind
46 Half of 7-Down
48 Court

Answer to Previous Puzzle



11-25

CRYPTOQUIP

M K Z Q T M D D Q M N
K W M D O R V A P A D V G A D D Y T
K W A R F Y M T, Y P Y T F Z D Y
A D R A R K Y G Z D K M N O A D V
K Q T O Y F

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: VERY NERVOUS ABOUT GIVING VACCINATIONS, THE YOUNG NURSE GAVE IT HER BEST SHOT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals N

Have a happy, stress-free holiday

Today is Thanksgiving, the time we pause to consider the blessings for which we are grateful. In many homes across this great nation of ours, turkeys are being stuffed — just as the people who consume them will be later in the day.

But for many individuals, today and the holidays that follow can be an intensely difficult time, triggering feelings of stress, loneliness and loss. If a person is prone to depression, these feelings can be further magnified.

How can anyone feel depressed at this time of year? It's not that far-fetched. People who are separated from their families often feel isolated because they can't celebrate in the traditional way. Families who have lost a loved one during the holidays often feel the absence especially at this time. Others become depressed because they realize that everyone else is enjoying a warm, idealized family experience, while they are on

the outside looking in. Even people who enjoy the holidays can find them stressful. This is a time of year when people are stretched for time, energy and money — particularly the latter. They may become embarrassed because they can't celebrate the way they would like to celebrate, or in the style they have in years past.

Some ways to ward off the holiday blues:

- Keep expectations reasonable. Don't take on more activities than you can handle — financially or otherwise.

- Don't overspend. Plan a holiday budget and live within it, regardless of the temptation.

- Do not run up credit card debt, or January will be like a serious hangover.

- And speaking of hangovers: Watch your alcohol intake. Remember, although alcohol seems to be a mood elevator, it is actually a depressant. If you have a

problem with alcohol, get whatever support you need to make it through the holidays.

A final thought: If you're feeling down and want an instant "upper," the surest way to accomplish it is to do something nice for someone else. Call someone who lives alone and invite that person to dinner. Better yet, say, "I'm coming to get you, and I'll see that you get safely home." (Some older people don't drive at night, and those who do might prefer not to be behind the wheel after dark.) Give it a try! You'll be glad you did.

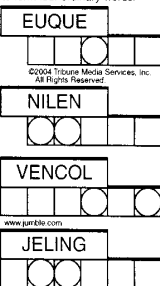
We have so much for which to be grateful this Thanksgiving Day. Those of us with a little time to spare, how about showing our gratitude to veterans by visiting a veterans hospital and raising the spirits of those who have served our country? Happy Thanksgiving, everyone!

— Love, Abby

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can e-mail to abby@www.uepress.com/dearabby or write to Universal Press Syndicate.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here:

_____ (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's

Jumbles: PAPER RABBI MODERN DENOTE
Answer: What she turned into when she got divorced — A NAME "DROPPER"

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argiron



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

A Thanksgiving prayer to share

Dear Readers:

Today is Thanksgiving. If you know someone who is alone today, please invite him or her to share your Thanksgiving dinner, and make the occasion truly special.

While many of us have a great deal to be thankful for, some of us are less fortunate. We hope all of you are able to find something for which you are grateful, no matter how small. If you can't think of anything, the following prayer may give you some suggestions.

Thanksgiving Prayer (Author Unknown)

We come to this table today, O Lord, humble and thankful and glad.

We thank Thee first for the great miracle of life, for the eagerness of being human, for the capacity to love.

We thank Thee for joys both great and simple — for wonder, dreams and hope; for the newness of each day; for laughter and song and a merry heart; for compassion waiting within to be

Annie's Mailbox



kindled; for the forbearance of friends and the smile of a stranger; for the arching of the earth and trees and heavens and the fruit of all three; for the wisdom of the old; for the courage of the young; for the promise of the child; for the strength that comes when needed; for this family united here today.

Of those to whom much is given, much is required. May we and our children remember this. Amen.

Dear Annie: Please remind your readers once again to Keep Kids Alive Drive 25. This is a proactive measure to mobilize citizens around the country to respond to the problem of speeding in their neighborhoods. Working with police departments, neighborhood groups, schools, municipal departments, civic groups and families, we hope to create safer streets for pedestrians and motorists alike.

According to the National High-

way Traffic Safety Administration, almost 175,000 pedestrians died on U.S. roadways between 1975 and 2001. Local roads, the streets right in front of most of our homes, are over twice as dangerous as highways by mile driven. Pedestrians are also three times more likely to die when struck by a vehicle traveling 30 mph vs. one traveling at 25 mph.

For the sake of children and adult pedestrians and their families, I ask communities around the country to join this campaign by visiting our Web site at:

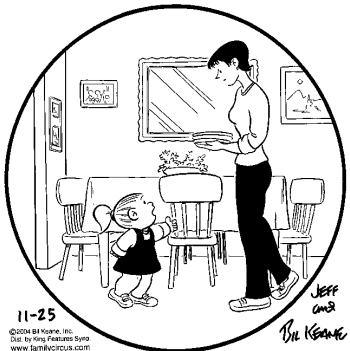
www.keepkidsalivedrive25.org. — Tom Everson, Executive Director

Dear Tom Everson: We are pleased once again to remind our readers not to drive over 25 mph when traveling through residential neighborhoods. It's worth those extra few miles-per-hour to save a life.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



11-25

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"Will our company and all of us fit at the same dinner table, or will us kids get demoted?"

GRAFFITI

BY THE CREATOR OF THE ORIGINAL



Donnis the Menace



"ARE YOU SURE PUMPKIN PIE DOESN'T COUNT AS A VEG-TABLE?"

© Gary Larson

The Far Side



Non Sequitur



SCOREBOARD

AFN-TV & Radio

Thursday

AFN-Sports, 1 a.m.—NBA: Detroit at Cleveland.

AFN-Sports and Radio, 1 a.m.—College basketball: Princeton NT semifinals, Wake Forest at Princeton.

AFN-Sports, 3:30 a.m.—College basketball: Minnesota Invitational championship game.

AFN-Atlantic, 3:30 a.m.—College basketball: Princeton NT semifinals, Michigan at Arizona.

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—Golf: PGA Grand Slam of Golf, final round.

AFN-Sports, 1 p.m.—College basketball: Great Alaska Shootout, Alabama vs. Alaska-Anchorage.

AFN-Sports, 4 p.m.—College golf: College of the Siskiyous, Redlands.

AFN-Radio, 10 p.m.—NFL: Indianapolis at Detroit.

AFN-Atlantic and Pacific, 6:30 p.m.—NFL: Indianapolis at Detroit.

AFN-Sports, 8 p.m.—NBA: Detroit at Cleveland.

AFN-Sports, 10 p.m.—Rock: Professional Bull Riders.

AFN-Atlantic and Pacific, 10:30 p.m.—NFL: Chicago at Dallas.

Friday

AFN-Sports, 1 a.m.—World Strongman Cup (dtd).

AFN-Atlantic, 2 a.m.—College football: The University at Pittsburgh.

AFN-Radio, 4 a.m.—NFL: Minnesota at Indianapolis.

AFN-Sports, 2:15 a.m.—NBA: Minnesota at Atlanta.

AFN-Sports, 4 a.m.—NBA: New Jersey at LA Clippers.

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—College basketball: Tennessee women at Texas.

AFN-Sports, 11 a.m.—College basketball: Great Alaska Shootout, Utah vs. Washington State.

AFN-Sports, 3 p.m.—College football: Wake Forest at Pittsburgh.

AFN-Sports, 5 p.m.—College football: Colorado State at Utah.

AFN-Pacific, 8:30 p.m.—College football: Louisiana State at Texas A&M at Austin.

AFN-Pacific, 8:30 p.m.—College football: Louisiana State at Texas A&M at Austin.

All times Central European Time; dtd indicates delayed broadcast. All listings are subject to change. Some radio broadcasts may not be available in all areas. Visit www.afn.net for more information.

College basketball

AP Top 25 schedule

Thursday

No. 21 Texas vs. No. 27 Virginia at Pittsburgh

Friday

No. 6 Texas vs. No. 27 Texas at Pittsburgh

No. 14 LSU at Arizona

No. 18 Arizona State at Arizona

Saturday

No. 1 Southern Cal. vs. Notre Dame

No. 5 Cincinnati vs. Cincinnati

No. 6 Georgia vs. Georgia Tech

No. 10 Boston State vs. Boston State

No. 11 Virginia Tech vs. No. 16 Virginia

No. 17 Tennessee vs. Kentucky

No. 17 Boston College vs. Syracuse

No. 20 Oklahoma State vs. Texas Tech

No. 24 UTAP at Tulsa

College basketball

AP Men's Top 25 rated

Tuesday

1. Wake Forest (9-0) did not play. Next: vs. Providence, Wednesday.

2. North Carolina (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: vs. Nevada, Monday.

3. Arizona (8-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Arkansas-Little Rock, Friday.

4. Kentucky (4-0) did not play. Next: at Arkansas-Little Rock, Friday.

5. Duke (2-0) did not play. Next: vs. Oakland, Mich. Wednesday.

6. North Carolina (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Boston State, in Sam Houston State, Saturday.

7. Connecticut (1-0) did not play. Next: vs. Rhode Island, Saturday.

8. Kentucky (4-0) beat Ball State 73-53.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

9. Duke (2-0) did not play. Next: vs. North Carolina, Saturday.

10. Michigan State (2-0) beat Wisconsin 80-66.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

11. North Carolina (9-0) vs. Tennessee 94-81.

Next: vs. Iowa, Wednesday.

12. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

13. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

14. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

15. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

16. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

17. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

18. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

19. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Next: at Wake Forest, Saturday.

20. Wake Forest (9-0) vs. Wake Forest 91-51.

Tuesday's men's scores

EAST

Albany, N.Y. 86, Siena 65

American U., W. 70, Wagner 49

College of William & Mary, W. 70, Virginia 62

Connecticut, W. 70, Delaware 67

Colgate 70, Cornell 56

Dartmouth, W. 70, Princeton 67

Fairfield 59, St. John's 58, OT

Holy Cross, W. 70, Boston College 62

Manhattan 67, Rhode Island 58

Marquette, W. 70, Saint Louis 65

Massachusetts 65, Birmingham-Southern 50

Monmouth, W. 70, New York 62

Penn 81, Drexel 50

Penn State, W. 70, St. John's 52

St. Peter's, St. Lafayette 64

St. Thomas, W. 70, St. John's 52

Temple 61, St. John's 52

UConn, W. 70, St. John's 52

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Tuesday's women's scores

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Boston U., St. John's 52

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Dartmouth, W. 70, Princeton 67

Fairfield 59, St. John's 58, OT

Holy Cross, W. 70, Boston College 62

Manhattan 67, Rhode Island 58

Marquette, W. 70, Saint Louis 65

Massachusetts 65, Birmingham-Southern 50

Monmouth, W. 70, New York 62

Penn 81, Drexel 50

Penn State, W. 70, St. John's 52

St. Peter's, St. Lafayette 64

St. Thomas, W. 70, St. John's 52

Temple 61, St. John's 52

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St. Joe's no longer in Kansas' league

No. 2 Jayhawks cruise to 40-point win

BY DOUG TUCKER

The Associated Press

LAWRENCE, Kan. — St. Joseph's picked a bad place and a terrible time to start life without guards Jameer Nelson and Delonte West.

With the two stars who led the Hawks to an unbeaten 2003-04 regular season now in the NBA, St. Joseph's was hopelessly outmanned against a No. 2 Kansas team that is bigger, more talented and had something to prove.

Miffed at dropping from No. 1 to No. 2, the Jayhawks shot better than 60 percent and routed last season's Atlantic 10 champions 91-51 Tuesday night.

"We were not ready to play against this level of competition in this setting," said St. Joseph coach Phil Martelli, last season's Associated Press coach of the year. "This is not something you want to go through too often."

Wayne Simien had 20 points and 13 rebounds — his second double-double in two games — as the Hawks came within four points of matching their worst loss, a 123-79 defeat against Cincinnati in 1959.

It was their first regular-season loss since Dec. 28, 2002.

"They missed a lot of shots," Kansas coach Bill Self said.

"We did some good things against them defensively. St. Joseph's is playing short-handed. That wasn't the same team as last year."

Kansas (2-0) drew motivation from dropping in the poll this week following a close season-opening victory over unranked Vermont.

"There was a little buzz in the locker room after that," the 6-foot-9 Simien said. "I was definitely nervous. We kind of used it as a motivation for this game, people not taking us seriously."

But rankings don't mean much and we're excited to get the win." St. Joseph's shot 19 percent in the first half on 5-for-26 shooting. "We brought boys and we played men," Martelli said. "It was across the board because even our freshmen were men."

Further weakening the Hawks was the dislocated shoulder that's sidelined Pat Carroll, their only returning double-digit scorer.



Kansas forward Wayne Simien, left, tries to control a rebound while defended by Saint Joseph's center Wayne Jones during the first half at Allen Fieldhouse in Lawrence, Kan., Tuesday.

"They're kind of in a rebuilding mode, losing two first-round picks, and Carroll was also out, one of their best players," Simien said. "So we just capitalized."

When Sasha Kaun hit a short jumper that put Kansas on top 83-41, St. Joseph's was in danger of breaking its record for most lopsided loss.

"I thought the real difference besides talent is that they have played a game," Martelli said.

The Hawks, favored to win their fifth straight Atlantic 10

title, made a futile attempt to keep pace with the taller and more experienced Jayhawks and often seemed to hurry their shots. The Hawks missed their first 10 three-pointers and wound up 2-for-18 behind the arc and 16-for-54 from the floor.

"Psychologically, the ball not going in does affect you," Martelli said.

Simien, who had 25 points and 14 rebounds against Vermont, earned his second double-double in two games with 4-6 left in the first half. He went to the bench with 12:33 to play.

Cal's focus on making BCS dream come true

By GREG BEACHAM

The Associated Press

BERKELEY, Calif. — After refusing to talk about the Bowl Championship Series standings for weeks and weeks, California coach Jeff Tedford finally is willing to admit he's been paying attention.

He still doesn't seem quite comfortable with the campaigning done by the coaching done at other schools, however.

Everyone knows the four-ranked Golden Bears (9-1, 7-1 Pac-10) are dying for their first trip to the Rose Bowl 45 years — but when first asked about their postseason hopes Tuesday, Tedford slyly said it "the opportunity to go to the bowl game that would be great to go to."

He quickly broke down and acknowledged the Bears' designs on Pasadena. They probably will need a victory over their hurricane-postponed regular season finale at Southern Mississippi on Dec. 4 to stay in position, but Tedford believes his players are excited about what should be in the complicated standings.

"It's something we need to keep an eye on now," Tedford said.

"That being said, the only thing we can control is how we prepare to play against Southern Miss."

And Tedford won't run up the score to do it. Even with the changes in the BCS format this season to de-emphasize computer evaluations, the nation's top coaches have wrestled with this ethical dilemma again. Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops admittedly padded the final score against Nebraska earlier in the season, but regretted it later.

"We're going to play our hardest, and if we get the fourth quarter and we're fortunate enough to be ahead, we're going to play the [reserves] of our team," Tedford said, noting Cal's 11 scoring edges over its opponents this season. "What do you have to do? Do you have to score 70? Is that worth it?"

Though Tedford is as savvy as any top coach, the Bears know the BCS is well down his list of priorities. Next week's preparations for Southern Miss might include BCS talk for the first time — but only in the context of a trip to the Rose Bowl.

"He really doesn't talk about it with us, except to remind us that it doesn't matter," quarterback Aaron Rodgers said. "He knows we hear stuff from friends and family, and he knows we watch TV, but nobody on this team is sitting around worrying about the BCS."

The players won't have to worry about anything this week, with two light days of practice followed by a three-day break for Thanksgiving. Even Tedford plans to stay home Thursday — his first day off since last summer.

Florida freshman leads rout against dad

The Associated Press

Sidney Green could only watch from the sideline as his team got picked apart — by his own son.

Freshman point guard Tarean Green sparked No. 23 Florida to a 90-45 victory Tuesday night over Florida Atlantic, the team coached by his father, a former NBA forward.

Painful loss, proud moment.

"I love my son like any other parent, any other dad would love their kid," Sidney said. "I want what's best for him, and that's why he's here. A great coach, a great system, a bunch of great players on this team and he played very well."

Tarean played 23 minutes and finished with eight assists, as many as any returning Florida player had in a game last year. He also scored eight points in a big first half, helping the Gators (2-0) to an easy victory in their home opener.

"It was weird seeing him over there during free throws and time-outs," the younger Green said. "Other than that, it was like a regular game."

Matt Walsh scored 21 points for Florida. Robert Williams led Florida Atlantic (0-2) with 10.

Gators coach Billy Donovan said the younger Green did well despite being placed in the awkward position of trying to beat his father's team.

"I liken it to someone who leaves their home state and goes back home to play their state school," Donovan said. "Those are tough things."

He handled it pretty well. He played very well right away. We were being pressed and trapped all over the floor, and he had no turnovers in the first half."

No. 6 Oklahoma State 90, Ark.-Little Rock 65: At Stillwater, Okla., John Lucas III scored 22 points, Joey Graham added 16 and Oklahoma State (2-0) pulled away in the second half.

No. 8 Kentucky 73, Ball St. 53: At Cincinnati, Patrick Sparks scored 20 points and Shagari Alleyne added three second-half dunks to lead Kentucky (2-0).

No. 10 Michigan St. 104, Wis.-Green Bay 46: At East Lansing, Mich., Alan Anderson led a balanced offense with 18 points, and Paul Davis had 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Spartans (2-0), who reached 100 points in consecutive games for the first time in more than 40 years.

No. 11 North Carolina 44, Tennessee 81: At Lahoma, Hawaii, Rashad McCants scored 27 points and North Carolina rode a sharp first half to victory in the semifinals of the Maui Invitational. The Tar Heels (2-1) will play Iowa in the championship game Wednesday.

No. 12 Louisville 93, Chalmers 63: At Lahoma, Hawaii, Taquean Dean scored 21 points



North Carolina's Rashad McCants, right, is fouled by Tennessee's Brandon Crump during UNC's 94-81 win in the Maui Invitational.

and Louisville bounced back from an opening-round loss at the Maui Invitational.

The Cardinals (2-1) will play Stanford for fifth place on Friday.

No. 13 Maryland 93, Mercer 67: At College Park, Md., Nik Caner-Medley scored 21 points, and Maryland (2-0) placed four other players in double figures. Chris McRay had 15 points and a career-best nine rebounds.

No. 14 Mississippi St. 82, UMKC 64: At Starkville, Miss., Wincome Frazier scored a career-high 30 points and Marcus

Campbell added 18 for the Bulldogs (5-1), who shook off a sluggish start and won their third straight. Lawrence Roberts had 15 points and 12 rebounds while playing with a plastic mask protecting his broken nose.

Iowa 82, No. 15 Texas 80: At Lahoma, Hawaii, Pierre Pierce hit a 25-foot jumper with 44 seconds left to give Iowa the lead for good in the semifinals of the Maui Invitational.

Jeff Horner led the Hawkeyes (3-0) with 27 points. Pierce, who had 18 points and seven assists, hurt his ankle on the final play of the game and left the Lahoma Civic Center on crutches. He was taken for X-rays.

Brad Bruckman led the Longhorns (2-1) with 18 points and 11 rebounds.

No. 20 Wisconsin 72, UC Santa Barbara 61: At Madison, Wis., Clayton Hanson scored 16 of his 18 points in the second half, and Wisconsin (2-0) earned its 30th consecutive victory at home.

No. 21 Notre Dame 73, Ind.-Purd.-Ft. Wayne 45: At South Bend, Ind., Chris Quinn scored 15 points and Dennis Latimore had career highs of 12 points and 11 rebounds to spark Notre Dame (2-0).

No. 25 Memphis 79, Arkansas State 75: At Memphis, Tenn., Sean Banks scored 28 of his career-high 31 points in the second half, leading the Tigers (4-1) to a lethargic victory. Banks also grabbed 10 rebounds.

Men's
Top 25
roundup

Fighting Irish undeterred vs. No. 1 Trojans

By TOM COYNE
The Associated Press

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Notre Dame isn't worried about a crisis of confidence against top-ranked USC, even after 31-point losses two years in a row.

"To the players, the reaction is a lot different," Notre Dame coach Tyrone Willingham said. "The point differential, I don't think, weighs as much as some other people think."

Willingham apparently was right, because line-backer Mike Goolsby was oblivious to how much the Irish lost by the previous two seasons until asked by a reporter whether it could hurt Notre Dame's confidence heading into the game.

"I suppose, when you put it like that, it's going to hurt your confidence," he said. "You guys bring these things up. I don't realize it. It's a little shocking to hear."

The Irish were shocked by their 44-13 loss to the Trojans two years ago. USC entered that game ranked No. 6 and Notre Dame was No. 7. Bowl Championship Series berths were at stake, and it was expected to be a close game. It wasn't.

Carson Palmer threw for 425 yards and four touchdowns, and USC compiled 60 yards of total offense. Both the passing yards and the total yards were the most ever against the Irish, and many believe it helped Palmer win the Heisman Trophy.

The Trojans weren't quite as dominant last season, but the result was the same. Matt Leinart threw for 351 yards and four touchdowns in the victory. Goolsby hopes the Irish (6-4) use the big losses as motivation.

"Because that's a beatdown, and you don't want to take that three years in a row," he said.

Defensive end Kyle Rudnick doesn't think the Irish are suffering from a lack of confidence going into Saturday's game against the Trojans (10-0).

"No one wants to hear me say, 'I know that we can win.' Especially with the situation that we're in now," he said. "I know a lot of people don't give us a chance. To me, that bothers me. That's why I want to go out and prove otherwise."



Freshman quarterback Brady Quinn leads the Irish this week against Southern Cal, which has posted back-to-back 31-point victories against the Irish.

The Irish point to the fact that they already have beaten Michigan and Tennessee, when those schools were in the top 10, as proof they can compete with the best teams. Brady Quinn compared Notre Dame's chances to Ohio State's upset victory over Michigan on Saturday.

"They were able to beat seventh-ranked Michigan and salvage their season in some ways," he said.

"Granted, I don't necessarily say we can salvage our season. But I think it would top it off pretty nicely."

Willingham said the Irish need to believe they can defeat the Trojans.

"You have to believe something can happen before it can happen," he said. "It doesn't happen most cases by just hoping and wishing. We've got to take the right approach in there and we have to execute on that approach."

Playing with the right attitude is going to be the key, Willingham said.

"We've got to carry in there a don't worry, have fun, loose attitude, nothing to lose in this contest, and go play some very physical football," he said. "If we take that, the right mind-set, then I think our bodies will be able to perform at a level that we'll be very comfortable with."

Franchione delivers on promise to A&M

Win vs. rival Texas will complete one of nation's biggest turnaround

By JOEL ANDERSON
The Associated Press

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Dennis Franchione had promised his second year at Texas A&M would be better than the first.

Franchione has delivered on that, turning around a team that went 4-8 last year to 7-3 this season with a No. 22 ranking. On Friday, the Aggies could top it all with a win over their archrival, No. 6 Texas.

Yet no one is more surprised at A&M's stunning turnaround this season than the coach who laid the foundation for it.

"We've taken a giant step from last year," Franchione said. "Maybe bigger than I was sure we could take in one year."

There were times when even he thought a quick fix was impossible, especially after a slew of lopsided defeats during the school's first losing season in 21 years.

The Aggies lost their final three games in 2003 by a combined score of 168-37, including a 77-0 rout at Oklahoma and a 46-15 home loss to Texas. The season was such a disappointment and the Aggies looked so awful near the end of the year that Franchione later admitted to sobbing after the defeat to the Longhorns.

"It was as tough a year as I've had in this profession," said Fran-

chione, who came to College Station in December 2002 after leaving Alabama.

Franchione didn't expect much from such a young team in his second year — even though every team he'd ever coached showed noticeable improvement after his first season.

Texas A&M lost its season opener to No. 5 Utah by 21 points, but reeled off six straight wins before stumbling in a sloppy overtime loss to hapless Baylor. The Aggies then gave No. 2 Oklahoma a tough game before losing by a touchdown and rebounded with their first win in four years over Texas Tech.

The Aggies have made huge improvements with the emergence of multitalented quarterback Reggie McNeal — fourth nationally in total offense — and the drastic upgrade of a defense that was so bad last season that it was stripped of its longtime "Wrecking Crew" moniker.

They also did it against the nation's toughest schedule: A&M's opponents this year have combined for a 68-34 record.

A&M's quick leap from conference doom to contender only confirmed Franchione's reputation for rebuilding programs. The gap between the Aggies and Texas doesn't seem nearly as large as it did when the winner of today's game will move into second place in the South Division.

Iowa, Ohio State, N. Carolina among schools going bowling

The Associated Press

Four Big Ten teams got their bowl assignments Tuesday, with co-champion Iowa leading the way to the Capital One Bowl in Orlando, Fla.

Wisconsin is headed to the Outback Bowl, while Purdue goes to the Sun Bowl and Ohio State plays in the Alamo Bowl. Also Tuesday, North Carolina accepted a bid to the Continental Tire Bowl and the Mid-American Conference agreed to send a team to the Silicon Valley Football Classic.

The No. 12 Hawkeyes (9-2, 7-1 Big Ten) earned their invitation to a third straight "New Year's Day bowl" after beating Wisconsin on Saturday, claiming a share of the conference title. Coach Kirk Ferentz was rewarded for his success with a contract extension that will pay him a base salary of \$1.2 million.

The Hawkeyes will play the second-half finisher in the Southeastern Conference.

Wisconsin made it to the Jan. 1 bowl in Tampa, Fla., after losing its final two conference games to miss out on at least a share of the league championship.

The 20th-ranked Badgers (9-2, 6-2 Big Ten) return to the Outback Bowl for the third year, including the 1995 game when it was called the Hall of Fame Bowl. Wisconsin also will face a team from the Southeastern Conference.

The Badgers were 9-0 and ranked fourth before they were blown out in back-to-back losses to Michigan State and Iowa.

Purdue goes to the Sun Bowl for the third time in four years.

The Boilermakers (7-4, 4-4 Big Ten), who have gone to a bowl game in each of coach Joe Tiller's eight seasons, will likely face either No. 18 Arizona State (8-2) or Oregon State (6-5) in the game in El Paso, Texas, on Dec. 31.

Purdue began the season 5-0 and got as high as No. 5 in the AP poll before losing four straight games by a total of 10 points. In their two previous trips to the Sun Bowl, the Boilermakers lost 33-27 to Washington State in 2001 and beat Washington 34-24 in 2002.

Ohio State was selected to play in the Alamo Bowl in San Antonio on Dec. 29 after upsetting No. 7 Michigan 37-21 last weekend.

The Buckeyes (7-4, 4-4) will play a team from the Big 12.

"We're so excited to be heading to the Alamo Bowl. I know our kids are looking forward to it," coach Jim Tressel said. "We look forward to filling up that Alamo Dome."

North Carolina heads to Charlotte, N.C., for a Dec. 30 game against a Big East team, giving the Tar Heels their second bowl bid in four years under coach John Bunting.



Iowa quarterback Drew Tate is sacked by Wisconsin's Dontez Sanders on Saturday. Iowa now to claim a share on the Sun Bowl title and will play in the Capital One Bowl.

The Tar Heels (6-5) closed the regular season with a 40-17 win at Duke, giving them three wins in their past four games to qualify for the postseason.

North Carolina played one of the nation's toughest schedules, earning key wins against Georgia Tech and North Carolina State. Last month, the Tar Heels upset then-No. 4 Miami 31-28, their first win over a top-five opponent.

The MAC will send a team to the Silicon Valley Football Classic on Dec. 30 in San Jose, Calif., to face a team from the Western Athletic Conference, taking the spot contractually reserved for the seventh-place Pac-10 team. The Pac-10 won't have enough bowl-eligible teams to fill its spot.

Toledo earns spot in MAC title game

The Associated Press

TOLEDO, Ohio — Bruce Gradkowski threw for 338 yards and directed six second-half touchdown drives in Toledo's 49-41 victory Tuesday night over Bowling Green, putting the Rockets in the Mid-American Conference title game.

The Rockets, trailing 27-7 at the half, dominated the third quarter with 28 straight points. They didn't take lead until Gradkowski threw his third touchdown pass, a 20-yard strike to Steve Odum with 2:20 left in the quarter.

Nothing went right for Bowling Green (8-3, 6-2 MAC) after halftime.

The Falcons, who entered into the Top 25 a week ago then dropped out despite not playing, were stopped on all three of their third-quarter possessions after scoring their first five times they had the ball.

Kicker Steve Susham's 41-yard field goal try cranked off the left upright and it all came apart when Bowling Green receiver Steve Sanders was stripped of the ball on a short pass play.

Toledo's Tyree Pollard recovered it at 22:22. Falcon's 22 setting up Jason Parmelee's 59-yard touchdown run that put Toledo ahead 35-27 on the final play of the third quarter.

Toledo (8-3, 7-1) will now play Miami of Ohio in the MAC title game at Ford Field in Detroit on Dec. 2. It will mark the fifth time the Rockets have played in the conference championship game since it began in 1997.

Starting to sound like a broken record

With 35 TD passes in 10 games, Manning nears Marino's mark

By NICHOLAS J. COTSONIKA
Detroit Free Press

Thirty-five touchdown passes.

"If I didn't throw another one the rest of the season, that's still the most I've ever thrown," Indianapolis quarterback Peyton Manning said. "I'd say I still had a pretty good year if I stopped right now."

Unfortunately for the Lions, who host the Colts in the annual Thanksgiving Day game, Manning has shown no signs of slowing, let alone stopping. In fact, he has accelerated.

The way he's going, he won't just break Dan Marino's 20-year-old record of 48 touchdown passes in a season. He will obliterate it.

He's on pace for 56.

"If he stays on track, he's going to challenge that record, which is really an accomplishment," Lions coach Steve Mariucci said. "I don't know if it equates to a more runs or what, but it's a large amount of touchdown passes for a season."

After throwing 17 touchdown passes in his first six games, Manning has thrown 18 in his past four.

Thirty-five TD passes in 10 games? You have to go back 17 games for the Lions to equal that many touchdowns. You have to go back 28 games for them to equal that many touchdown passes.

"He's doing some things that only a few guys in history have had a chance to do," Lions cornerback Fernando Bryant said. "Over the last 10 years, he's the most complete player in this league."

After sharing the NFL's most valuable player award with Tennessee quarterback Steve McNair last season, Manning went back to work. In March, he was at team headquarters with quarterbacks coach Jim Caldwell studying his performance.

"He put up some goals of things he wanted to do and ways we could get better," Colts coach Tony Dungy said. "That's the way he approached it."

The receivers studied, too, and Manning has been going over things with them at almost every opportunity this season — in the locker room, in the downtime during special-teams practice. They talk about routes, adjustments, what they're looking for against various coverages.

"That's really what it takes to get things the way you want them," said Manning, 28. "Everybody has good players and high picks, but our offense work and kind of our behind-the-scenes work is really paying dividends now."

Manning has a great rapport with offensive coordinator Tom Moore, who directed the Lions' explosive offense in the

mid-1990s, and he is so smart and so prepared, he steps up to the line of scrimmage with the option to run or pass every time — a rarity in the NFL.

"He can call a pass every play," Dungy said.

It might seem like he does. More than 75 percent of the Colts' touchdowns have come on passes. Five receivers have caught at least five touchdown passes. Not only does Manning lead the NFL in TD passes, he leads the league in passing yards (2,960) and passer rating (122.2).

But if the defense gives him a cushion, he will hand off to Edgerrin James. In a 41-10 victory at Chicago last week, Manning threw for 211 yards and four touchdowns, and James ran for 204 yards and a TD.

James makes Manning more dangerous. "It's all about just trying to execute the best play, whether it's a run or pass," said Manning, in his seventh season. "I have no greed or no ego whatsoever about checking to the runs if it gets us to the best play. ... If we go up to Detroit and hand it off 40 times, I have no problem with that."

But Manning is drawing attention from the media for his season.

Even Marino, who works for CBS, has interviewed him.

"I can't imagine what it's like for those baseball players," Manning said. "If any-



Colts QB Peyton Manning, who has thrown 18 touchdown passes in his past four games, is 14 TD passes from breaking Dan Marino's season record of 48 set in 1984.

body gets on a hitting streak, trying to go after DiMaggio's streak, or anybody that's flirting with hitting .400, like Ted Williams, that's a lot of games those guys have to deal with those questions."

Manning has been humble.

"The more you think about it, it makes you realize how special the '84 season by Marino was," he said. "I mean, that's a lot of touchdowns. Forty-eight still seems like a long way away right now."

Some Lions have to scrape to get by these days

By CURT SYLVESTER
Detroit Free Press

DETROIT — Steve Mariucci just wanted to make sure his rookies were prepared for the season. Not Thanksgiving. Not Christmas.

Winter.

So the Detroit Lions head coach called his rookies together at the end of practice Tuesday — all 12 of them on the roster and practice squad — and presented each of them the piece of equipment he has found indispensable in surviving a Michigan winter.

A snow scraper.

It started a month ago when

Mariucci met — as he frequently does — with the rookies to make sure they were adjusting well to life in the NFL.

He suggested snow tires and four-wheel-drive vehicles for the Southerners in their first winter up north, and then rookie wide receiver Roy Williams raised a question.

Williams: "What are those things?"

Mariucci: "What?"

Williams: "What are those things?"

Mariucci: "Scrapers."

So, with snow flurries forecast this week, Mariucci decided it was time to distribute the survival equipment.

"I hope this is not a salary-cap cost," he said laughing. "I thought I'd get them one because it's very timely right now, because I think it's coming."

"We talked about how you use them. There were some real good questions. Does that thing scratch my window? That sort of thing. So they're ready for the winter. Some of these guys have never seen snow before."

Williams, who grew up in Odessa, Texas, is among those unfamiliar with snow. He has seen an occasional flurry but never enough to shovel or scrape off a windshield. And if he ever saw ice on his windshield, he found other ways to get rid of it.

"We didn't have scrapers," he said. "We usually poured hot water over it."

"I actually asked Coach Mooh, 'How do you get snow off the car?' That's where all that came from."

Mariucci learned the value of a scraper growing up in Iron Mountain in the Upper Peninsula. He said he first realized some NFL players had a problem with snow and winter conditions when he was an assistant coach at Green Bay, working with Brett Favre.

Favre grew up in Mississippi and — like Williams — wasn't prepared for winter in the north.

"Favre was over one night for dinner or something," Mariucci

said. "When he was leaving — it was probably December — he had his shorts on, his flip-flops and shirt. He walked out, so Gayle and I were watching him leave."

Favre made it to his four-wheel drive, which was covered with 3 or 4 inches of freshly fallen snow, but he obviously wasn't dressed for snow-removal duty.

"I go, 'We've got to watch this,'" Mariucci said, laughing.

"You think he scrapes his car off? No. He rolls down his window and drives home with his head out the window."

"I yelled at him down the street, but he didn't care. He needed a scraper. That's why these guys need one."



Top Scores for Week 11

272	lawhawk	Huttler Kaserne	1808
272	GLADIATOR 36	HSC 94 ECR(N)	1798
272	575Porty	Fort Hood, TX	1782
272	staff777	HHOC 501st MI BN	1778
270	Wayne Bratcher	80th ASG NSA DPW	1762
268	seahawksfan	409th bsb	1760
266	warvet27	Camp Arifan	1760
266	Scottie Pimpin	MCAS Iwakuni	1754
266	Caseyken	CFAY	1754
266	G-Man	1/10th SFG(A)	1752

Sponsored by:

Best Overall Scores

1808	STEEFROGWOOD	MAC-12
1798	giants1	hbc 2/37 ar
1782	archy	European Stars & Stripes
1778	Jaguar One	DoDDS
1762	SPIELMEISTER 04	Hohenfels
1760	Jack58	422 ABS RAF Croughton
1760	Chickypowow	726 AMS
1754	dogboy	374 AMKS
1754	Joe Corleone	Misawa
1752	Allisond	18 CES

See website for official game rules.

Check this space every Thursday during the entire NFL season for the weeks Top Scores and Best Overall Scores during the NFL Challenge.

Lions' Rogers consistently disrupting his neighborhood

BY LARRY LAGE

The Associated Press

ALLEN PARK, Mich. — Shaun Rogers is in the backfield as often as some running backs.

Whether teams dare to block Detroit's star defensive tackle with one player or follow the trend of double-teaming him, he often rises through offensive lines with a rare combination of size, speed, strength and nimble footwork.

Not much about the Lions has been consistently good this season, but the four-4-4, 345-pound Rogers has emerged as one of the NFL's most dominant players.

"I think Shaun Rogers is the best defensive lineman in the game, not just the best defensive tackle," Lions CEO Matt Millen said Tuesday. "Some might be stronger, quicker or bigger, but nobody has his combination of all those things in addition to being as smart as he is."

The reeling Lions (4-6) are expected to be handled easily by the high-scoring Indianapolis Colts (7-3) on game Thursday, but Rogers will make his share of plays.

When Colts quarterback Peyton Manning started preparing for the game, he kept noticing No. 92 causing problems for Detroit's opponents.

"He really jumps up on film," Manning said. "He's a real difference-maker on that defense. The offensive line is going to have to account for him."

Dallas coach Bill Parcells said few are as big and disruptive as Rogers.

"Last year for Carolina, Kris Jenkins was a little bit like that, but I don't even think to the extent that Rogers is," Parcells said earlier this season.

Indianapolis coach Tony Dungy, who coached some of the game's best defensive tackles — Warren Sapp and John Randle — when he was in Tampa Bay and Minnesota, said Rogers reminds him of a former Seattle star.

"He's a lot like Cortez Kennedy and some of the bigger, more powerful guys who have really wreaked some havoc in the NFL," Dungy said. "I haven't been fortunate enough to have any of those big massive guys. He's a load in there."

Rogers was honored and humbled when the compliments were relayed to him, but Detroit's four-game losing streak doesn't allow him to celebrate anything these days.

"It's bittersweet," he said. "As a competitor, you want to dominate the men or men — across from you and you want to be noticed around the league for it. But you play this game to win and right now, we're not winning."

Rogers, a Pro Bowl alternate last season, has 46 tackles and 4½ sacks this season, his fourth in the NFL. He also has broken up four passes, recovered a fumble and blocked the fifth field goal of his career.

"He's having a heck of a year, his best year," Lions coach Steve Mariucci said. "He's the leading vote-getter for the Pro Bowl at his position."

When Rogers doesn't make a tackle, he often ties up a lineman or two, allowing teammates to roam free to make the play.



Lions defensive tackle Shaun Rogers has emerged as one of the top defensive tackles in the NFL despite Detroit's four-game losing streak.

"People don't understand that unless they really know football," Detroit defensive tackle Dan Wilkinson said. "This is my 11th year in the league, and he's definitely one of the best I've seen at our position."

Rogers' fantastic season probably will lead to a very lucrative contract.

Detroit probably will have to at least match the deal Carolina gave Jenkins during the 2003 season. The Panthers signed Jenkins — sidelined this season with a shoulder injury — to a five-year, \$31 million contract extension that included a \$9 million signing bonus.

"This is the last year on my contract, but I don't think you're ever totally unrestricted in this game because of the franchise-tag option teams have," Rogers said. "A new contract was brought up early in the year, but that has been left alone for now. I'm just letting that rest so that I can concentrate on playing ball and helping us dig out of our situation."

"I would love to stay here, but this is a business and you have to act accordingly."

Millen declined to talk about specifics involving previous contract negotiations or future discussions with Rogers, but made it clear Detroit wants to re-sign him.

"We've got to get a new deal done with Shaun," Millen said. "He's a guy you definitely want to build around."

NFL statistics

American Conference Individual leaders

Week 11

Quarterbacks

Player	Att	Yds	AVG	TD	Int
Manning, Ind.	274	2144	2660	35	7
Brees, S.D.	220	1708	1458	20	9
Ruehlhuber, Pitt.	192	1213	1088	12	6
Pennington, N.Y.	216	1441	1043	19	8
Green, K.C.	226	1384	1055	15	11
Brady, N.E.	207	1342	1043	18	8
Plummer, Den.	231	1292	1036	21	10
Carr, Hou.	217	1355	1042	18	8
Lefkovich, Jac.	273	1771	1089	9	5
Volk, Tex.	171	1043	615	6	5

Rushers

Player	Att	Yds	AVG	TD	Int
James, Ind.	220	1051	4.8	40	0
Martin, N.Y.	238	1072	4.5	28	9
Dillon, N.E.	209	1068	4.8	44	0
Holmes, K.C.	196	892	4.5	33	14
Brown, Tex.	188	1444	538	3	0
Tomlinson, S.D.	126	853	3.9	42	9
Johnson, Cin.	222	872	3.9	5	5
Doughless, Den.	174	844	4.9	51	2
Taylor, Jac.	168	75	0.4	0	0
Staley, Pitt.	153	707	4.7	38	1

Receivers

Player	No	Yds	AVG	LG	TD
Mason, Ten.	62	746	12.0	37	4
Gates, S.D.	70	713	11.1	29	9
Johnson, Hou.	57	659	11.5	54	4
Ward, Pitt.	78	719	11.0	38	3
Gonzalez, K.C.	56	733	13.1	32	2
C. Johnson, Cin.	59	679	11.5	49	4
Moutts, Buff.	51	679	13.3	49	4
J. Smith, Jac.	49	679	13.9	42	4
Harrison, Ind.	51	673	13.2	52	4
McMichael, Min.	49	673	13.7	48	3

Punters

Player	No	Yds	AVG	LG	TD
Lechler, Oak.	43	2066	67	48.0	0
J. Miller, N.E.	30	1359	61.9	45.3	0
Smith, Ind.	30	1339	61.3	44.6	0
Hendrich, Tex.	42	2020	60.0	43.7	0
Baldwin, Buff.	52	2221	42.8	43.3	0
Gardocki, Pitt.	48	2066	58.0	42.0	0
Jonen, Den.	40	1709	42.7	42.6	0
Larson, Cin.	60	2044	34.6	42.4	0
Harrison, Jac.	50	2115	42.3	42.3	0
Scifres, S.D.	40	1692	60	42.3	0

Kickoff Returners

Player	No	Yds	AVG	LG	TD
Clemens, Buff.	35	907	25.9	98	2
Northcutt, Cin.	15	183	12.2	46	0
Smith, Den.	14	164	11.7	30	0
Ward, Pitt.	44	163	3.7	28	0
Lewis, Jac.	21	216	10.3	50	0
Moss, Hou.	20	216	10.8	50	0
Parsons, S.D.	24	179	7.5	32	0
Weiker, S.D.-Mil.	22	180	8.2	23	0
Ward, Pitt.	30	174	5.8	34	0

Kickoff Returners

Player	No	Yds	AVG	LG	TD
Alston, Buff.	35	907	25.9	98	2
Northcutt, Cin.	15	183	12.2	46	0
Smith, Den.	14	164	11.7	30	0
Ward, Pitt.	44	163	3.7	28	0
Lewis, Jac.	21	216	10.3	50	0
Moss, Hou.	20	216	10.8	50	0
Parsons, S.D.	24	179	7.5	32	0
Weiker, S.D.-Mil.	22	180	8.2	23	0
Ward, Pitt.	30	174	5.8	34	0

Scoring

Player	TDs	Yds	AVG	LG	TD
Holmes, K.C.	15	14	0.9	0	60
Bettis, Pitt.	10	9	0.9	0	60
Martin, N.Y.	10	9	0.9	0	60
Sates, S.D.	9	9	0.9	0	54
Tomlinson, S.D.	9	9	0.9	0	54
Waymire, Ind.	8	7	0.9	0	48
Dillon, Hou.	8	7	0.9	0	48
Harrison, Ind.	6	6	0.9	0	48
Lefkovich, Jac.	6	6	0.9	0	48
Lellie, Den.	6	6	0.9	0	48
Pollock, Ind.	6	6	0.9	0	48

Kicking

Player	PA	FG	LG	FG	LG
Vinateri, N.E.	27	27	25.30	45	302
Elliott, Den.	26	26	25.00	45	302
Thomas, N.Y.	18	18	25.00	45	302
Kaeding, S.D.	14	14	25.00	45	302
Sover, S.D.	14	14	25.00	45	302
Dawson, Cin.	14	14	25.00	45	302
Janikowski, Oak.	13	13	25.00	45	302
Tynes, K.C.	13	13	25.00	45	302
Johnson, Ind.	13	13	25.00	45	302
Reed, Pitt.	12	12	25.00	45	302
Vanderjagt, Ind.	12	12	25.00	45	302

Team statistics

OFFENSE

Team	Yards	Rush	Pass
Kansas City	407	173	234
Indianapolis	410	183	226
Denver	354	127	227
San Diego	351	141	210
Houston	346	141	205
New York Jets	337	147	190
Pittsburgh	336	161	167
Jacksonville	329	112	217
Tennessee	324	144	204
Oakland	310	78	233
Cincinnati	288	117	191
Cleveland	282	111	171
Washington	271	145	126
Buffalo	264	104	163
Baltimore	261	124	140

DEFENSE

Team	Yards	Rush	Pass
Baltimore	273	77	196
Buffalo	260	103	157
Pittsburgh	257	104	153
Denver	256	104	152
Miami	251	103	148
New York Jets	248	103	145
Tennessee	243	103	140
San Diego	242	103	139
Cleveland	232	103	129
New England	225	103	122
Cincinnati	213	103	110
Washington	212	103	109
Philadelphia	211	103	108
Atlanta	208	103	105
Arizona	207	103	104
Washington	206	103	103
Chicago	205	103	102
Detroit	204	103	101

Team statistics

DEFENSE

Team	Yards	Rush	Pass
Washington	273	87	186
Tampa Bay	264	103	161
New York Giants	259	103	156
Philadelphia	258	103	155
Arizona	257	103	154
Green Bay	254	103	151
Atlanta	253	103	150
Carolina	252	103	149
San Francisco	251	103	148
Detroit	250	103	147
Minnesota	249	103	146
St. Louis	248	103	145
New Orleans	247	103	144

National Conference Individual leaders

Week 11

Quarterbacks

Player	Att	Yds	AVG	TD	Int
Culpepper, Min.	353	2488	2745	27	6
McNabb, Phil.	322	2068	2482	22	5
Ortiz, T.D.	309	2183	2550	19	11
Favre, G.B.	348	2306	2626	19	11
Bulger, N.E.	362	2319	2535	19	11
Warner, WGN	268	1985	2262	19	11
Vick, Atl.	218	1615	2015	19	11
Brady, S.F.	265	1857	2062	18	9
Harris, W.C.	294	2174	2268	18	9
Rodriguez, W.C.	268	1857	2062	18	9

Rushers

Player	Att	Yds	AVG	TD	Int
Alexander, Sea.	224	1115	4.9	10	0
Brown, N.Y.G.	255	1035	5.0	72	9
Portis, Wash.	238	1029	4.3	64	2
Wright, N.Y.G.	189	979	5.2	50	6
M. Faulk, S.D.	154	676	4.4	40	7
Smith, Ariz.	181	688	3.8	30	0
Vick, Atl.	89	640	7.2	58	1
Westbrook, Phil.	121	584	4.8	26	0
Dunn, Atl.	147	583	4.0	26	0
T. Jones, Cin.	135	570	4.2	26	0

Receivers

Player	No	Yds	AVG	LG	TD
McNabb, Phil.	58	645	11.3	79	8
Bruce, S.F.	58	605	10.4	38	3
E. Johnson, S.F.	56	627	10.6	25	2
Owens, Phil.	52	588	11.3	50	0
Witten, Dal.	57	650	11.4	42	1
Wright, N.Y.G.	51	619	12.1	50	0
Holt, S.D.	53	724	13.7	52	6
Clayton, T.B.	52	613	11.8	32	3
Coles, Wash.	52	606	11.7	45	1

Punters

Player	No	Yds	AVG	LG	TD
Lechler, Oak.	43	2066	67	48.0	0
J. Miller, N.E.	30	1359	61.9	45.3	0
Smith, Ind.	30	1339	61.3	44.6	0
Hendrich, Tex.	42	2020	60.0	43.7	0
Baldwin, Buff.	52	2221	42.8	43.3	0
Gardocki, Pitt.	48	2066	58.0	42.0	0
Jonen, Den.	40	1709	42.7	42.6	0
Larson, Cin.	60	2044	34.6	42.4	0
Harrison, Jac.	50	2115	42.3	42.3	0
Scifres, S.D.	40	1692	60	42.3	0

Kickoff Returners

	No	Yds	Avg
mond, Det.	23	316	13.7
m, Atl.	25	322	12.9
arters, Chi.	27	308	11.4
on, Min.	14	144	10.3
N.O.	20	194	9.7
S.F.	23	212	9.2
Dal.	14	114	8.1
an, G.B.	22	169	7.7
ms, Ariz	26	189	7.3



William Paulson, 26, describes the brawl that took place at The Palace of Auburn Hills at the end of the game between Detroit and Indiana Friday night, during a news conference in the law offices of Jeffrey Fieger on Monday in Southfield, Mich. At left is attorney Todd J. Weglarz, who was holding the news conference in Fieger's absence. Paulson is among those filing suit in the aftermath of the brawl.

Two Pistons fans sue Pacers

BY DAVID RUNK

The Associated Press

DETROIT — Two fans sued the Indiana Pacers and players Ron Artest, Stephen Jackson and Jermaine O'Neal on Tuesday, contending they were injured in the brawl at the end of the Pistons-Pacers game.

Lawyers for John Ackerman and William Paulson filed suits in Oakland County Circuit Court in Pontiac, seeking unspecified damages.

Ackerman, a 67-year-old retired auto worker, says he was hit by O'Neal and then by a chair that a fan hurled into the crowd. His suit also names Palace Sports & Entertainment Inc., which operates the Pistons' arena.

"He was knocked unconscious

by the chair," said Todd Weglarz, who along with lawyer Geoffrey Fieger represents the men. "The next thing he recalls is being helped into a wheelchair."

Police released a copy of a videotape Tuesday showing a man who investigators believe threw the chair, and they asked the public to help to identify him.

Fieger, a former Democratic gubernatorial candidate, is known for representing high-profile clients such as assisted-suicide advocate Jack Kevorkian.

Paulson, 26, says he was punched by Jackson and assaulted by Artest. Weglarz said Paulson's family has had Pistons season tickets for about 25 years.

Paulson, who works in real estate, and Ackerman have been diagnosed with concussions from the brawl, Weglarz said.

The NBA suspended Artest for the season, Jackson for 30 games and O'Neal for 25.

Pistons spokesman Matt Dobek said the team and the Palace were aware of the lawsuits but declined comment. The Pacers did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

Oakland County prosecutor David Gorevica has said the only possible felony charge in the brawl could be against the chair-thrower. He said other charges most likely would be for misdemeanor assault and battery.

Auburn Hills police Lt. James Manning said the investigation could take two to three weeks. Investigators are reviewing videotapes and interviewing witnesses. Artest and other Pacers had not been interviewed, Manning said.

said, investors and customers want to see the guy whose name is on the door address it.

"Stakeholders wanted a no-holds-barred response, and that's what they got [from Stern]," the California-based Carter said Tuesday. "Anything short of what he did would have raised questions."

Last week's brawl spawned a national debate about the behavior of fans and millionaire athletes.

Within two days, Stern banned Indiana's Ron Artest for the season and two fellow Pacers — Stephen Jackson and Jermaine O'Neal — for 30 and 25 games, respectively. Six other players were suspended for far lesser periods, four of them for just one game.

The NBA players' union filed an appeal Tuesday on behalf of those players, asking that an arbitrator decide whether the punishments were excessive.

The union's director, Billy Hunter, has apologized for the "reprehensible" behavior in Friday's melee. But he argued during ABC's "Nightline" on Monday that the players were being sacrificed to placate fans and sponsors.

"[Stern] has to demonstrate that somebody's in control because NBA basketball is a multi-billion-dollar industry," Hunter said.

"But, you know, again, I can't sit back as the head of the union and not act or respond in an instance where I think the commissioner's overreacted."

Carter said there is a risk of turning off the league's corporate sponsors if the suspensions are reduced.

Stern "knows that how he handles this and how the league rebounds from this will go a great distance in establishing his legacy and whether the NBA can continue generating cash."

Players' union wants appeals to go to arbitrator

By CHRIS SHERIDAN

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Employing an unexpected strategy in an effort to fight the suspensions leveled by Commissioner David Stern, the NBA players' union is seeking to have the case heard by an arbitrator.

The union filed an appeal Tuesday on behalf of Indiana Pacers players Ron Artest, Stephen Jackson and Jermaine O'Neal, who were suspended for their roles in a brawl with Detroit Pistons fans last week.

Artest was banned for the season, Jackson for 30 games and O'Neal for 25. Union director Billy Hunter has called the penalties excessive, saying a suspension of about 35 games would have been more appropriate for Artest.

Now, Hunter appears to be attempting an end-around to avoid the rule stating the commissioner has sole authority and is the final avenue of appeal — over matters of discipline involving on-court behavior.

"The players' association's efforts to bring this matter before an arbitrator ignores the plain language of the collective bargaining agreement and the consistent past practice of the parties and will amount to a fail," NBA spokesman Brian McIntyre said.

Stern would normally have 20 days to rule on an appeal of an on-court discipline matter, and it was unclear whether the union's appeal strategy would put this case under that timetable.

"The action taken by the commissioner sets a new high-water mark in terms of the kind of discipline he feels he can impose," Hunter said. "I think he has exceeded his authority and should be subject to review and challenge."

In other developments:

■ Two fans sued the Pacers and Artest, Jackson and O'Neal, contending they were injured in the fracas at the end of Friday night's game at Detroit. John Ackerman, 67, says he was hit by O'Neal and then knocked unconscious by a thrown chair. William Paulson, 26, says Artest and Jackson assaulted him.

■ Police released a videotape and asked the public's help in identifying a man who investigators believe hurled the chair into the crowd during the brawl. Oakland County prosecutor David Gorevica has said the only possible felony charge in the brawl could be against the chair-thrower. He said other charges most likely would be for misdemeanor assault and battery.

■ Artest appeared on NBC's "Today," saying he respected Stern but thought his punishment

was unduly harsh. He used the opportunity to plug a CD he produced for the R&B group and wore a T-shirt and hat emblazoned with the logo of his record label.

The players' union was contemplating taking its case to federal court. A similar strategy failed in 1997 when the union contested the suspensions handed out to four members of the New York Knicks for leaving the bench during a fight in a playoff game against the Miami Heat.

In that case, U.S. District Judge Jed S. Rakoff cited article XXXII, section 8 of the league's collective bargaining agreement establishing the commissioner as the complete and final authority on discipline for what happens on the court.

The language, the judge said, is "so plain, so clear, so unequivocal, so on-point to the dispute that underlies this controversy."

"In that case we were seeking an injunction. We may not pursue that if we pursue this in federal court," Hunter said, adding the union will argue that since some of the punishable behavior happened in the stands, it should not fall under the definition of "on-court behavior."

"We think the court is limited to the court itself, the 90-by-50 piece of hardwood, and the benches," Hunter said.

In 1998, the union successfully appealed the one-year suspension Stern gave to Latrell Sprewell, then with the Golden State Warriors, for attacking coach P.J. Carlesimo during practice. It was reduced by an arbitrator to 68 games.

The difference between Sprewell's case and the current one is that Sprewell's attack on Carlesimo happened in practice, so it was not considered on-court behavior and was subject to the arbitration provisions of the collective bargaining agreement.

The suspensions also could be contested by the Pacers, who have the right under NBA bylaws to appeal the commissioner's decision to the league's Board of Governors.

No NBA team has ever made such an appeal, according to the league.

Pacers spokesman David Bender said the team had not yet decided if or how it might contest the penalties.

Artest bolted into the stands after being hit by a cup thrown by a fan, touching off a brawl in which players exchanged punches with fans, who also threw drinks, popcorn, and other debris at the Pacers.

Jackson also went into the stands and exchanged punches with fans, while O'Neal hit a fan who ran onto the court.

SPORTS



A&M's turnaround would be complete with victory Friday over Texas, Page 26



Jones reunion falls into place

Thanksgiving 'good as it gets' for RBs, family

BY JAIME ARON
The Associated Press

IRVING, Texas — Thomas and Betty Jones fully appreciate the good health and great timing that's bringing their entire family together on Thanksgiving for the first time in nine years.

Like thousands of families across the country, they'll spend Thursday afternoon watching the Chicago Bears play the Dallas Cowboys. Except there's one big difference: Their sons will be the starting running backs for both teams, Thomas of the Bears and Julius of the Cowboys.

"That's probably as good as it gets," Betty Jones said. "It will be a day we never forget."

The family has been looking forward to this game since Julius was drafted in April. Several things nearly threw off the reunion, but everything has fallen into place.



AP photos

Julius Jones, left, and Thomas Jones, right, will start for their respective teams when the Bears play the Cowboys on Thanksgiving, the first time the entire family has been together for the holiday in nine years. Parents and siblings will split their allegiance.

"This is not the biggest thing in life," says the proud pop, "but it's darn near it." Thomas and Julius are the only boys among seven children.

They've always been extremely close and have shared a love of football.

When they watched NFL games as kids, they imagined being a running back/brother tandem like Joe and Jamie Morris.

Individually, Thomas wanted to be like Chicago's Walter Payton, and Julius looked up to Dallas' Tony Dorsett and Herschel Walker.

Amazingly, each is now starring for those teams.

Only three years apart, they shared a bedroom until Thomas left for college.

They still talk several times a week — except so far this week while preparing for their first head-to-head football game that doesn't involve crayons, folded paper triangles or a joystick.

"That's probably all we used to fight about, Nintendo games," Julius said, laughing. "We were on the same pee-wee football team, and we got our pads the first day. He duped me into trying my pads on and then he'd take me outside and bang me around a little bit. Other than that, we got along really well."

Their bond was strengthened in 2002, when Julius was academically ineligible at Notre Dame. Thomas was going through his own tough times on the Arizona Cardinals and invited Julius to live with him. They sometimes could be found alone in a gym at 4 a.m., channeling their frustrations into weightlifting.

"It would be pretty tough for me to say that I would be here without him," Julius said.

When they see each other on the field Thursday, they'll certainly share a big hug. Just imagining that scene chokes up their father, a former employee at a super-maximum security prison who rarely shows emotion.

SEE JONES ON PAGE 28

Pacers show some fight



AP photos



Left: Indiana Pacers guard Jamaal Tinsley (left) and Boston Celtics guard Paul Pierce battle for a loose ball during the fourth quarter in Indianapolis. Tinsley finished with 29 points to lead the short-handed Pacers to a 106-96 victory. It was Tinsley's first game since the brawl that led to the suspension of several Indiana players. He suffered a wrist injury during that melee.

Above: Tinsley displays the number of teammate Ron Artest (91) on the back of his shoe during the game. Artest was suspended for the season. Tinsley also wore wristbands with the names and numbers of suspended players Stephen Jackson and Jermaine O'Neal. For details on the game and on ramifications of the brawl, see Pages 30-31.



Kansas hands St. Joseph's one of worst losses ever

Page 25

BIG TEN
CONFERENCE
Bowl assignments doled out for four in Big Ten

Page 26

Manning moving faster than record pace for TD passes Page 27